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PARDON PUSHBACK

Military law experts critical of Trump's plan
to forgive troops accused of war crimes

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Presidential pardons for American servicemembers convicted or accused of war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, including murdering unarmed enemy fighters, could undermine military leadership and might complicate the U.S. relationship with key allies, several military law experts said.

Retired top military officers and former judge advocates joined a growing chorus this week imploring the White House not to issue pardons in high-profile war crimes cases, including at least two special operators who face courts-martial on charges that they killed detained, unarmed combatants. The concerns have

swelled since a report Saturday by the New York Times, which cited two unnamed senior U.S. officials, that President Donald Trump was working with the Pentagon and Justice Department to assemble pardon documents for Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher and Army Maj. Matthew Golsteyn, among others, whom could be pardoned by Memorial Day, which is Monday.

Those potential pardons — and others including Marine scout snipers convicted of crimes related to urinating on dead Taliban fighters in 2011 and a Blackwater security contractor convicted of killing Iraqi civilians in 2007, the Times reported — would follow the recent pardon of former Army 1st Lt. Michael Behenna, who

SEE PARDONS ON PAGE 8



Behenna



Gallagher



Golsteyn



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Runway is ready, but flights still on hold at new US drone site

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. military has finally completed runway work at a new air base in Agadez, Niger, but Air Force officials said Wednesday it will still be several months before flight operations can begin at what is anticipated to be a major intelligence gathering hub in western Africa.

The \$110 million initiative — one of the

largest Air Force-managed building project in history — is almost two years behind schedule. Operations were initially planned to begin in late 2017, but the effort ran into repeated delays as a result of complications connected to working in the austere southern Sahara desert.

The bulk of the construction is now complete at the site referred to as Air Base 201. However, the U.S. needs to sort out various operational procedures with the government before flying can start, the

military said.

"We are working closely with the Government of Niger and Department of State to assist the Nigeriens with the challenges of air traffic control and airfield security," Lt. Col. Dustin Hart, a spokesman for U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa, said in a statement.

Hart said the hope is that flights will commence in late summer or early fall.

SEE BASE ON PAGE 9



DANIEL ASSETTA/Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

Airmen assigned to the 31st Expeditionary Squadron use a steamroller on asphalt at Air Base 201 in Niger in December.

MILITARY

Pentagon restricts sharing of information

Memo details criteria for how to respond to lawmakers' requests

By MISSY RYAN AND GREG JAFFE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON—Acting defense secretary Pat Shanahan has mandated new restrictions on the way the Pentagon shares information with Congress about military operations around the world, a move that is straining ties with key Republican and Democratic lawmakers.

In a May 8 internal memo, which was obtained by The Washington Post, Shanahan lays out the criteria for when Pentagon officials may provide congressional offices or committees information they request about operational plans and orders.

The memo comes as lawmakers from both parties complain that the Trump administration has withheld information that prevents them from executing their constitutionally mandated oversight role. Some lawmakers are also concerned about whether Shanahan has allowed the military to be drawn too deeply into President Donald Trump's immigration agenda.

"Congress oversees the Department of Defense; but with this new policy, the department is overstepping its authority by presuming to determine what warrants legislative oversight," Reps. Adam Smith, D-Wash., and Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said in their ranking Republican of the House Armed Services Committee.

The memo was shared widely inside the Pentagon but was sent to key lawmakers only after inquiries by The Post. It outlines a half-dozen guidelines, including requirements that military officials and political appointees evaluate whether the request "contains sufficient information to dem-

onstrate a relationship to the legislative function." The memo urges Defense Department officials to provide a summary briefing rather than a requested plan or order itself.

The memo appears to have been inspired by concerns that lawmakers, who have security clearances, will safeguard military plans. It calls on officials to assess "whether the degree of protection from unauthorized disclosure that Congress will afford to the plan is equivalent to that afforded" by the Pentagon.

Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the memo "seems to be another way in which they can claim that they don't need to respond to legitimate inquiry of Congress." Reed received the memo Saturday, shortly after The Post asked the Pentagon about it.

"From what I can glean from the memorandum basically they can use any factor they want to say no and they can make a determination what they think we need to do our job," Reed said in an interview. "I think we're better positioned to determine what we need to do our job."

A defense official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to describe military officials' thinking about the memo, said Pentagon leaders had been concerned about preserving the military chain of command and about the potential for congressional interference in what they consider to be an executive branch function, the formulation of military operations.

The official said that Congress had been most interested in learning more about Special Operations activities, which are among the most sensitive military operations but have also, in recent years, produced some of the biggest public backlashes.

"While I understand they're not happy ... we've gone from saying no to setting a process to adjudicate and consider saying yes," the official said.

The guidelines represent a dramatic

twist in a decadeslong tug-of-war between the Pentagon and Congress over access to sensitive information.

While lawmakers routinely request information on a host of military matters, including weapons programs, personnel procedures and support to allies, they are also sometimes provided classified information about current or future military operations, which they are barred by law from disclosing.

The memo could complicate Senate confirmation hearings for Shanahan, who took over in January after his predecessor, Jim Mattis, resigned over differences with Trump. Shanahan is expected to appear before the Senate Armed Services Committee in June.

Lt. Col. Joe Buccino, a spokesman for Shanahan, said the new policy aims to increase "transparency and information sharing with Congress."

Under Shanahan's direction, Buccino said, "the Department of Defense has been engaging with the Senate and House Armed Services Committees to develop a process for providing Congress with access to plans and operational orders, including Executive Orders."

While Trump has praised Shanahan, a former Boeing executive, numerous lawmakers have expressed skepticism about his ability to act as a counterweight to the president and his closest advisers in delicate matters of national security. Mattis labored to insulate the military from the country's divisive politics and the White House, which won him plaudits from lawmakers but damaged his relationship with Trump.

Since taking on the top Pentagon job, Shanahan has presided over a deepening of the military's involvement along the southern border, a mission Mattis viewed with skepticism but did not resist.

In the new memo, Shanahan concentrates responsibility for evaluating congressional requests in the office of the

undersecretary of defense for policy, which is typically led by a political appointee. Previously, officials across the Defense Department responded to requests on a more ad hoc basis, in keeping with what officials described as a "gentleman's agreement" with lawmakers.

According to Reed, obtaining access to such information has become harder since Trump took office. Reed cited a 2017 operation in Niger in which four U.S. servicemen died, after which he said lawmakers had to "track down" the related operational orders and review the legal authorities under which troops were operating.

"This seems to be another way in which they can claim that they don't need to respond to legitimate inquiry of Congress," he said in an interview.

Officials from the Pentagon and Capitol Hill agreed that a more formalized process for sharing information, if done in a mutually acceptable way, would be of value.

A former senior Pentagon official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the memo did not appear to establish a more difficult process for routine congressional requests related to other oversight topics.

"Rather, it appears to set an elevated, formal and mostly reasonable process, relative to requests for a specific and especially sensitive subset of Pentagon materials provided the Pentagon doesn't seek to weaponize the process to frustrate a broader range of oversight requests, which would be deeply problematic," the former official said.

Smith and Thornberry said they intended to address the sharing of operational information in this year's defense authorization bill, which is now being drafted.

They appeared particularly galled by the memo's suggestion that Congress might make sensitive information public, which they characterized as "inexcusable and inaccurate."

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MILITARY



CAPTIN DOORNBOS/Stars and Stripes

The children of Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Supple — James, 9; Charles, 7; Juliet, 4; Alexander, 1; and William, 12 — watch as the USS Ronald Reagan departs Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Wednesday.

Reagan leaves homeport for year's first patrol

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Sailors' families gathered on the pier Wednesday morning as the USS Ronald Reagan left its homeport to patrol the Indo-Pacific region, its first deployment of 2019. Sailors in their dress whites lined the flight deck of the aircraft carrier as it sailed from Yokosuka. Loved ones looked on and waved, some with tears in their eyes.

The Ronald Reagan is the nation's only carrier permanently deployed outside the United States, allowing the Navy to respond in the Indo-Pacific in a matter of days with a ship that would take weeks to arrive from the U.S., according to a statement Wednesday from the Navy.

The carrier's air wing — based at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in southwestern Japan — is expected to join the Ronald Reagan at sea. Typically, the ship deploys with a strike group of destroyers, cruisers and an unannounced submarine presence.

The Ronald Reagan starts its latest patrol as other ships of the 7th Fleet have stepped up the frequency of freedom-of-navigation operations and exercises with allies like the Philippines and Japan in contested areas of the East and South China seas and in the Taiwan Strait.

In the past week and a half, for example, a U.S. Coast Guard cutter and a U.S. destroyer on separate missions both sailed near Scarborough Shoal, a relatively small feature west of the Philippines controlled by China but claimed by both countries and Taiwan.

The Navy does not typically respond to queries about the length of a carrier deployment or its destination, including port calls. Navy officials did not respond to requests for information Wednesday.

"Forward presence truly matters. For more than seven years, our forces have been present and ready to respond immediately on behalf of our friends and allies," Task Force 70 commander Rear Adm. Karl Thomas said in the statement. Thomas, who took his post July 18 aboard the Ronald Reagan, has tactical control of carrier strike groups, cruisers and destroyers in the 7th Fleet area of operations, according to the Navy.

Throughout the year, the task force, which includes the Ronald Reagan, typically takes part in deployments and training exercises with other naval units, including those of U.S. partners, according to the Navy.

"The continued presence of Ronald Reagan and all our forward-deployed forces in the Indo-Pacific region, at sea where it matters most, promotes security and stability which in turn drives peace and



TYRA CAMPBELL/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Sailors man the rails on the flight deck of the USS Ronald Reagan on Wednesday.

prosperity to benefit all regional countries," Thomas said in the statement.

In a press call last week, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson declined to say whether an aircraft carrier would visit Vietnam this year. Reuters in April quoted Randall Schriber, the assistant secretary of defense for the Indo-Pacific region, as saying the U.S. hoped to arrange such a visit.

In March 2018, the USS Carl Vinson made history when it pulled into Danang, the first U.S. carrier to visit the country since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975.

Last summer, the Ronald Reagan spent five days in Manila during a break from training with Philippine forces.

Since December, when it returned from its second patrol of 2018, the carrier had been undergoing maintenance and upgrades at Yokosuka. It spent a combined six months at sea last year.

"Reagan Sailors worked hard to complete the most successful maintenance period the ship has ever seen," Capt. Pat Hannifin, the ship's commander, said in the statement. Hannifin took command at sea on Sept. 10.

"Reagan returns to the sea more lethal than ever, visibly renewing U.S. commitment to international norms in a free and open Indo-Pacific," he said. "We value our allies and partners in the region and are excited to support them again with our air wing and strike group from the sea."

Stars and Stripes reporter Seth Robson contributed to this report.
doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos

Trump nominates former diplomat for USAF secretary

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced he would nominate Barbara Barrett, a former ambassador to Finland and certified astronaut, to be the next secretary of the Air Force, replacing Heather Wilson, who is slated to leave that post at the end of this month.

"I am pleased to announce my nomination of Barbara Barrett of Arizona, and former Chairman



Barrett

of the Aerospace Corporation, to be the next Secretary of the Air Force. She will be an outstanding Secretary!" Trump announced via Twitter late Tuesday afternoon.

Barrett, 68, is a businesswoman and pilot who has substantial government experience, according to a biography provided by Sen. Martha McCall's office. The Arizona Republican championed Barrett's nomination to Trump, calling Barrett, a fellow Arizonan, a close friend via a statement.

"Ambassador Barrett is a force to be reckoned with and who has the leadership, experience, and knowledge to lead our Air Force into the future during a time of increased global threats," McCall said in the statement. "I have confidence that Ambassador Barrett will lead the way in maintaining air and space dominance and continue to build upon the initiatives, leadership, and example set forth by Secretary Heather Wilson."

Last week, the Pentagon announced Matthew P. Donovan, the undersecretary of the Air Force, would become the service's acting secretary on June 1, following Wilson's departure.

Wilson announced in March that she would leave the job at the end of May to become the president of the University of Texas at El Paso. The service's 24th secretary, she will have served for just more than two years when she leaves the Pentagon.

If confirmed, Barrett would lead an Air Force looking to grow its ranks as it faces a shortage of pilots and as Congress considers adding a new uniformed service, the Space Force, under the Air Force secretary's control. The Air Force also faces challenges rebuilding at least two major installations — Tyndall Air Force

Base in Florida and Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska — that suffered billions of dollars of damage due to natural disasters in recent months.

Barrett holds a bachelor's, a master's and a law degree from Arizona State University, according to the school. She has trained additionally as an astronaut and as a civilian pilot, according to her biography.

The Washington Post reported Barrett is a certified astronaut, undergoing training in Russian and Kazakhstani to become the backup crewmember for the International Space Station as a space tourist. Barrett didn't end up going to space, because the primary passenger — Cirque du Soleil co-founder Guy Laliberté — was able to travel.

In 1994, she ran unsuccessfully for the Republican nomination for governor of Arizona.

In addition to her time serving as chairman of The Aerospace Corporation's Board of Trustees, a federally funded national security and military space research and development center, she spent time in 2012 as the interim president of Thunderbird School of Global Management and as the CEO of the American Management Association. She was the founding chairwoman of the Valley Bank of Arizona and a former partner at a large law firm in Phoenix, according to the biography.

Under President George W. Bush, Barrett served as the U.S. ambassador to Finland from 2008 to 2009 and later she was a senior adviser to the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. She served as deputy administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and as vice chairwoman of the Civil Aeronautics Board under President Ronald Reagan.

According to McCall's office, Barrett was the first female civilian pilot to land an F/A-18 Hornet fighter jet on an aircraft carrier. She told Business Jet Traveler in 2014 that she was challenged by a Navy admiral to attempt the landing while she advocated in the early 1990s to lift a law barring women from piloting fighter jets.

"There was a Navy admiral who had daughters [and was] not one to be told girls can't do these things," she told the magazine.

"He invited me to train and qualify to fly an F-18 Hornet. I had the privilege of landing on the [USS] Nimitz."

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

MILITARY



Burns



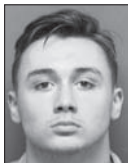
Chaparro



Cooney



Johnson



Tuschmann

5 sailors charged in sexual assault

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Five sailors were arrested Friday at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in Texas on charges that the men sexually assaulted a woman last year, law enforcement officials said.

The sailors arrested are Mauricio Chaparro, 28, Kenneth Johnson, 20, Anthony Cooney, 21, Dominick Burns, 20, and Kyle Tuschmann, 19, said Adelina Simpson, a spokeswoman for the Bexar County Sheriff's Department. The sailors spent the weekend in a county detention center and arrived Tuesday at a jail in Hays County, where the charges are filed. It is located just north of San Antonio, which is in Bexar County.

A Hays County grand jury indicted the men on April 24, each on four counts of aggravated sexual assault

and with a bond of \$500,000, according to indictment records. Burns, Cooney and Tuschmann are accused of performing sexual acts on the same woman and the other two men are listed as "intentionally and knowingly" participating in the crime, according to the records.

Police were called to the scene of the incident at about 10:13 p.m. on May 19, 2018, according to a San Marcos police report. A woman said she'd been sexually assaulted in the back of a truck at San Marcos' Rio Vista Park. The incident report states the woman initially did not want to pursue charges, but returned to a police station the next day and was cooperative.

Hays County District Attorney Wes Mau said Tuesday that he could not comment further on the case.

Bexar County Sheriff's Department took the five men into custody Friday at Lackland Air Force Base to

transfer them to Hays County, where they were indicted on the charges, Simpson said.

Base personnel escorted the men just outside the gates at Lackland, where local authorities arrested them, said Cmdr. James Stockman, spokesman for the Naval Education and Training Command.

The men all were students at the Navy's Master at Arms Apprenticeship Training at the Naval Technical Training Center in May 2018, at Lackland, Stockman said. The seven-week training course prepares sailors to enter Navy law enforcement careers such as base security or dog handlers.

They had remained at the center "suspended in training status due to alleged misconduct," Stockman said.

thayer.rose@stripes.com
Twitter: @Rose_Lori

Japanese man arrested after laser pointed at Yokota-based aircraft

By HANA KUSUMOTO
AND SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A 60-year-old Japanese man was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of pointing a laser at a U.S. Air Force plane in western Tokyo.

Yoshinori Shigekawa, of Akiruno, is suspected of beaming a green laser at a cargo aircraft from a shopping mall's multistory parking garage in Fussa, on Feb. 11, a Tokyo Metropolitan Police spokeswoman said Wednesday.

The laser interfered with visual safety checks by the Yokota-based plane's crew, including its pilot, causing training to be called off, she said.

Lasers were pointed at two Air Force C-130J Super Hercules planes for less than 10 seconds in February, U.S. Forces Japan spokeswoman Air Force Maj. Genieve White wrote in an email Wednesday.

"Lasing an aircraft is hazardous and irresponsible since the laser can impair the vision of pilots, potentially affecting their ability to fly the aircraft safely," she said. "This is incredibly dangerous for both the aircrews and for people on the ground. We take these incidents seriously as the safety of both our aircrews and the community is a top priority."

The Air Force reports lasing incidents to local police and shares as much information as possible, White said.

"Locally, Yokota Air Base leadership has been working with North Kanto Defense Bureau in order to increase public awareness about how dangerous this activity can be for both aircrews and people on the ground," she said. "There have been approximately 11 lasing incidents involving 374th Airlift Wing aircraft since July 2018."

robson.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @SethRobson1



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PACIFIC

Symposium highlights 'gray zone' response

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Democratic nations must consider giving their militaries greater authority in intervening in "gray zone" conflicts with adversaries such as China and Russia, a top Army official said Tuesday.

Competitors have noted the American military's ability to overwhelm adversaries in head-to-head military conflict, and so they keep the threshold of clashes in the gray zone, or "left of conflict," said Lt. Gen. Eric Wesley, deputy commander of concepts at the U.S. Army Futures Command, during a panel at the annual Land Forces Pacific Symposium in Honolulu.

"This is a challenging one for nations of Western democratic nature because we find it unattractive for military institutions to be actively involved 'left of conflict' without sufficient authorities," he said. "But because they have seen we're very good at conflicts, our peer adversaries have invested in ways that achieve their operational and strategic objectives in the competition space."

China's building of artificial islands is the most egregious example of how this plays out. The islands were built up and militarized over a number of years, with China providing little information about their intent.

Chinese ships and aircraft also frequently challenge U.S. movements through the South China Sea, sometimes with dangerous maneuvering.

Much of this year's three-day symposium, sponsored by the Association of the U.S. Army, focuses on the role of land forces in multidomain operations, the aim of which is integrating air, sea, land, cyber and space under seamless command of the service branch best suited for particular tasks. The symposium's emphasis reflects the Pentagon's shift to a strategy focusing on great-power competition rather than counterterrorism.

"The challenges in the Indo-Pacific region are likely to expand exponentially over time," Maj. Gen. Ronald Clark, commander of the 25th Infantry Division, told the audience. "It's important, actually critical, that every service from every region — our armies,



Visitors explore the exhibition hall Tuesday at the Land Forces Pacific Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii.

WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

air forces and marines — work together in a joint context across all domains to get after a free and open Indo-Pacific region."

He cited several nascent examples of such integration. During last summer's Rim of the Pacific naval exercise, the Army fired missiles from the Hawaiian island of Kauai at a target ship at sea.

"The 25th Infantry Division integrated Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy personnel into our joint air-ground integration center on the Big Island last month as part of a division-level, combined-arms live fire," Clark said.

In December, the Army published "U.S. Army in Multi-Dom-

ain Operations 2028," a kind of blueprint for "how U.S. Army forces, as part of the Joint Force, will militarily compete, penetrate, disintegrate, and exploit our adversaries in the future," Army Chief of Staff Mark Milley wrote in the document's forward.

It laid out a suite of alternatives for responding to gray-zone challenges by competitors. The joint force "expands competitive space through active engagement to counter coercion, unconventional warfare, and information warfare directed against partners," the document explained.

"These actions simultaneously deter escalation, defeat attempts by adversaries to 'win with-

out fighting,' and set conditions for a rapid transition to armed conflict."

Wesley referred often to the document during a panel discussion on the strategic environment in the Pacific theater.

The U.S. and its allies must "train our military institutions to get into the competition space to ensure we enable our own strategic and operational objectives," Wesley said.

"The dirty little secret is that this is not a future concept," he said. "It's not as if to say the dynamics exist now."

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: @WyattOlson

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SEAFOOD
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ENTREE
Grilled NY Strip, Grilled Corn, Grilled Potatoes, Grilled Zucchini, Grilled Asparagus, Grilled Corn, Grilled Potatoes, Grilled Zucchini

DESSERT
Fresh Peach Short Cake, Grilled Corn, Grilled Potatoes, Grilled Zucchini

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THE NEW SANNO

MILITARY

ROTC cadet receives posthumous honors

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Riley Howell, a University of North Carolina Charlotte student and ROTC cadet who died after charging and tackling a gunman who opened fire in a university classroom, was posthumously awarded the ROTC Medal of Heroism earlier this month.

Howell was also honored by local police in a separate ceremony last week for his actions, which were credited with saving lives and allowing authorities time to capture the gunman, who he pinned down during the April 30 shooting that left him and 19-year-old Ellis Reed Parlier dead. Four more students were wounded.

"He protected his fellow classmates by tackling the suspect and using his body as a human shield," the ROTC award summary stated. "His actions that day left him mortally wounded, but he saved an unde-

terminable amount of lives."

The citation said Howell demonstrated the values of the U.S. Army "by showing a high level of integrity, honor, and selfless service on that fateful day."

Howell's family received the award in a private ceremony on May 11, the Army said in a statement.

The ROTC Medal for Heroism is awarded to cadets who distinguish themselves by acts of heroism performed on or off campus, the Army said. It must be "so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the individual apart from other persons in similar circumstances" and must involve "the acceptance of danger or extraordinary responsibilities, exemplifying praise-



Howell

worthy fortitude and courage."

Enrolled in his first year of Army ROTC, Howell was not contracted to join the service, said Lt. Col. Chunka Smith, who runs the school's Army ROTC program. But Howell always set a great example and would have been an excellent Army officer, Smith said.

Howell was shot at least three times while charging the shooter, including once in the head at point-blank range, his parents, Thomas Howell and Natalie Henry-Howell, told the New York Times earlier this month. No one was shot after he body-slammed the gunman, police said, according to his mother.

The 21-year-old's brave sacrifice earned widespread praise, including a police escort when his body was returned to his hometown of Waynesville, N.C., where people lined the streets to honor him days after his death.

He was laid to rest with military funeral

honors on May 5, including a rifle detail, the playing of taps and the presentation of the burial flag to the family.

Last week, Howell was also posthumously awarded the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Civilian Medal of Valor, UNCC said in a statement. Howell was the first-ever civilian to receive the award, which is the highest honor the department can give, it said.

His parents, siblings and girlfriend accepted it on his behalf during an awards ceremony and received a standing ovation, video from Charlotte's WBTV shows.

"In a split second, Riley chose to fight. He would not live to know that his actions saved others," said CMPD Lt. Brad Koch during the May 15 ceremony. "Riley died as he lived — selflessly, bravely and in service to others."

garland.chad@stripes.com
Twitter: @chadgarland

Marine's Medal of Honor returns home to Minnesota

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Pennsylvania nonprofit dedicated to educating Americans about citizenship and community service has fulfilled a family's wishes and shipped a Marine hero's Medal of Honor home for display.

The medal — earned by Maj. Henry Courtney Jr. on the bloody slopes of Okinawa's Sugar Loaf Hill — arrived in Courtney's hometown of Duluth, Minn., by secure courier shortly before it was announced May 15, according to a statement by the St. Louis County Historical Society and members of Courtney's family.

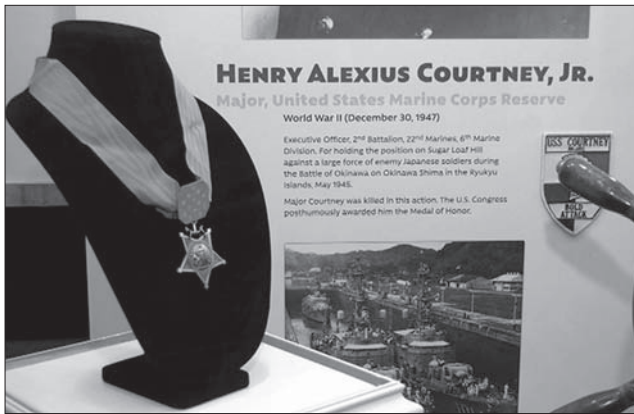
The society's Veterans Memorial Hall museum will house the award. The medal was loaned to the society by the Valley Forge-based Freedoms Foundation following a request by Courtney's descendants.

The medal for now is in a secure vault, Courtney's nephew Court Storey, who was named for the Medal of Honor recipient, wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes. An installation ceremony and public reception is scheduled May 29 to officially place the medal in the museum gallery.

"Our family is very pleased," Storey said. "We are pleased and gratified that the [Freedoms Foundation] has worked with us to allow the Courtney [Medal of Honor] to return and be displayed in Henry Courtney's hometown of Duluth where he was born and raised, where his family lived and was part of the community for more than a half century, where he and his parents are buried, and where his story will continue to be told."

The medal's journey to Veterans Memorial Hall Gallery has been a long one.

Courtney was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously after leading a daring assault on Sugar Loaf Hill on the night of May 14, 1945, telling his Marines, "I'm going up Sugar Loaf Hill.



Courtesy of St. Louis County Historical Society

A replica of Marine Maj. Henry Courtney Jr.'s Medal of Honor has been on display at Veterans' Memorial Hall at the St. Louis County Historical Society in Duluth, Minn.

Who's going with me?" Every man in his charge rose and followed.

An attorney before the war and a Marine reservist, he was killed by Japanese mortar fire after a vicious close-quarters fight, but not before his Marines had inflicted heavy casualties, which ultimately led to taking the strategic position days later.

The medal was accepted by Courtney's parents on Dec. 30, 1947, the historical society's statement said.

J. remained under the care of Courtney's family until 1980, when it was gifted to the Freedoms Foundation by his sister Elizabeth Bean, under the condition that Courtney's story be told in a meaningful way.

The family later discovered the foundation had no display honoring Courtney, his story was not being discussed and his medal

was kept locked away in a vault with several others.

In 2013, historical society officials in Duluth put on the first of several events honoring Courtney, which have included an exhibit at the memorial hall. Retired Marine Capt. Mike Stainbrook, a Duluth resident, contacted the family on behalf of the society and expressed interest in displaying the medal at the hall's museum.

In November 2015, Storey and seven other Courtney nieces and nephews wrote to the foundation asking that ownership of the medal be transferred to the Duluth museum. The foundation's board of directors balked at first, saying they wanted to honor Bean's intent with her gift.

Stainbrook and Courtney's descendants vowed to see Courtney's medal displayed in his hometown. They wrote letters

and rallied support from the public, veterans and members of the U.S. military stationed at home and abroad.

The Veterans Memorial Hall Gallery underwent a \$75,000 renovation in 2016 to make housing items like the medal possible, historical society officials said previously. The renovations included increased security for the Medal of Honor display in a section called "Medal of Honor Row," which features exhibits on Duluth Medal of Honor recipients.

A replica of Courtney's medal was installed Nov. 12.

In February, following articles in Stars and Stripes, local publications and an ensuing letter-writing campaign, the Freedoms Foundation acquiesced, willing to loan the medal.

The loan agreement is long-term and will be reassessed at



Courtesy of Court Storey

Marine Maj. Henry Courtney Jr. received the Medal of Honor posthumously for leading a daring assault on Okinawa's Sugar Loaf Hill in May 1945.

various prearranged intervals, Storey said. It can be canceled should either party become insolvent or break its stipulations.

Stainbrook said they could not have brought the medal home to Duluth without their vocal supporters, especially those stationed at Marine Base Camp Courtney on Okinawa, which was named in honor of Courtney.

"I would very much like to express my sincere gratitude to all of those who took an interest in returning Major Courtney's medal home and supported us in this cause," Stainbrook said. "Thank you all for being a part of bringing a happy ending to this story."

The May 29 ceremony will feature a historian to provide context on the Battle of Okinawa, the society's statement said.

A dinner program honoring all five of northeastern Minnesota's Medal of Honor recipients is scheduled for Nov. 15 and will feature a speech by retired assistant commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Richard Neal.

burke.matt@stripes.com

MIDEAST

Trump officials: Goal with Iran is deterrence

Democrats: Consultation with Congress inadequate

By LISA MASCARO
AND SUSANNAH GEORGE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tamping down talk of war, top Trump administration officials told Congress on Tuesday that recent actions by the U.S. deterred attacks on American forces. But some lawmakers remained deeply skeptical of the White House approach in the Middle East.

After a day of closed-door briefings on Capitol Hill, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said their objective over recent days has been to deter Iran. Now they want to prevent further escalation, Shanahan said.

“We’re not about going to war,” Shanahan told reporters.

“Our biggest focus at this point is to prevent Iranian miscalculation,” said Shanahan, flanked by Pompeo, after back-to-back briefings for the House and Senate. “We do not want the situation to escalate.”

The officials arrived on Capitol Hill as questions mounted over President Donald Trump’s tough talk on Iran and sudden policy shifts in the region. Skeptical Democrats sought out a second opinion, holding their own briefing with former Obama administration officials, former CIA Director John Brennan and Wendy Sherman, an architect of the Iran nuclear deal.

The competing closed-door sessions Tuesday came after weeks of escalating tensions that raised alarms over a possible military confrontation with Iran.

Trump, veering between bombast and conciliation in his quest to contain Iran, threatened Monday to meet provocations by Iran with “great force,” but he also said he’s willing to negotiate.

The results of the meetings Tuesday were mixed, with views settling largely along partisan lines.

Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, said the action taken by the Trump administration “is totally appropriate” and sends a message that “if you attack our people, there will be



Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan, left, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo speak Tuesday after a classified briefing for members of Congress on Iran.

a response.”

Romney characterized it as defensive in nature and meant to deter Iran from “malign” actions.

Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego, a veteran of the Iraq War, left the classified House briefing, saying: “What I heard in there makes it clear that this administration feels that they do not have to come back and talk to Congress in regards to any action they do in Iran.”

Democrats are particularly concerned the Trump administration may try to rely on nearly 20-year-old war authorizations rather than seek fresh approval from Congress for any action.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer

‘Our biggest focus at this point is to prevent Iranian miscalculation.’

Patrick Shanahan
acting defense secretary

said he told Pompeo and the others their consultation with Congress has been “inadequate.” Shanahan said he and the others heard that message and vowed to better communicate with lawmakers and the public.

In recent weeks, the U.S. sent an aircraft carrier strike group, four bomber aircraft and other assets to the region, and is moving a Patriot missile battery to an undisclosed location in the area. The Trump administration has evacuated nonessential personnel from Iraq, amid unspecified threats the administration says are linked to Iran.

Shanahan said the recent U.S. actions in the region were based on “credible threats” to U.S. forces and interests in the Middle East.

“We have deterred attacks based on our repositioning of assets, deterred attacks against American forces,” he said.

Pompeo said he tried to put the Iran situation in the country’s 40-year history of

“malign” actions.

Pompeo, a former congressman, has become somewhat of a polarizing figure on Capitol Hill, and some lawmakers left the meeting saying he was lecturing and arrogant.

Democratic Rep. Adam Smith of Washington, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, said he interjected at one point during the briefing: “We know Iran is bad, OK? What is the policy going forward? There wasn’t enough information on that.”

Smith said Pompeo was asked why it took so long to brief Congress. The congressman said the secretary’s answer was, “We were busy.” He said it was not an acceptable answer.

Earlier, Brennan told House Democrats that while Tehran wants to avoid conflict, the country’s leadership will not capitulate to Trump. Sherman warned that reckless behavior by the Trump administration in Iran is hurting the U.S.’s credibility and undermining moderates in the country.

Top Democrats say Trump escalated problems by abruptly withdrawing the U.S. from the Iran nuclear deal.

“I have yet to see any exhibited strategy,” said Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, a former CIA officer. She said she finds many of the administration’s recent statements on Iran to be “deeply troubling.”

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the House intelligence committee, said, “What I’m interested in more right now is what the administration’s strategy is — if they have one — to keep us out of war.”

Republicans and Trump’s allies in Congress said the threats from Iran are real. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., suggested lawmakers who say otherwise are doing so for political reasons. GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina urged Trump to “stand firm.”

The U.S. military appears to have concluded that Iran was behind the reported attack May 12 on four commercial vessels off the coast of the United Arab Emirates. A U.S. official said Monday a probe into the attack was finished and evidence still pointed at Iran, although the official did not provide details.

Iranian lawmaker says his country doesn’t want war with US

By NASSER KARIMI
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran will “under no circumstances” enter a war either directly or indirectly with the United States, a prominent reformist Iranian lawmaker said Wednesday, as both Washington and Tehran try to ease heightened tensions in the region.

The reported comments by Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh come after the White House earlier this month sent an aircraft carrier and B-52 bombers to the region over a still-unexplained threat it perceived from Iran.

Since that development, Iran has announced it will back away from the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, an accord that President Donald Trump pulled America out of a year ago. The United Arab Emirates, meanwhile, alleged that four oil tankers

‘Under no circumstance will we enter a war.’

Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh
Iranian lawmaker

were sabotaged off its coast, and Iranian-allied rebels in Yemen have launched drone attacks into Saudi Arabia.

Falahatpisheh’s comments, reported by the semi-official ILNA news agency, carry additional heft as he serves as the chairman of the Iranian parliament’s national security and foreign policy commission.

“Under no circumstance will we enter a war,” Falahatpisheh said, according to ILNA. “No group can announce that it has

entered a proxy war from Iran’s side.”

Since Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution, Tehran has worked to leverage relationships with the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, Hamas in the Gaza Strip and others to counter what it perceives as the threat from America’s vast military presence across the Mideast. Analysts believe that if attacked, Iran could rely on those militant groups to target American troops, Israel and other U.S. allies in the region.

On Monday, Iran announced it had quadrupled its production capacity of low-enriched uranium. Iranian officials made a point to stress that the uranium would be enriched only to the 3.67% limit set under the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, making it usable for a power plant but far below what’s needed for an atomic weapon.

But by increasing production, Iran soon will exceed the stockpile limitations set by the nuclear accord. Tehran has set a July 7 deadline for Europe to set new terms for the deal, or it will enrich closer to weapons-grade levels in a Mideast already on edge.

The U.S. Air Force announced Wednesday that a B-52 bomber deployed to America’s vast Al-

Udeid Air Base over the tensions took part in a formation flight with Qatari fighter jets. That came as Qatar has grown closer to Iran after facing a nearly two-year boycott by four Arab nations also allied with the U.S.

“This flight was conducted to continue building military-to-military relationships” with Qatar, the Air Force said.

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MILITARY

Pardons: Professor says GIs might not follow rules if president acts

FROM FRONT PAGE

was convicted in 2009 of the "unpremeditated murder" of a prisoner in Iraq a year earlier.

Military law experts polled this week by Stars and Stripes agreed Trump had every constitutional right to pardon the service members, but several of them warned that granting clemency to the people convicted or accused of wrongdoing in war zones risked signaling to American troops that they had the license to kill indiscriminately in combat.

"This would be a terrible decision," said Eric Carpenter, a former Army prosecutor and defense attorney who teaches law at Florida International University. "He plays into our enemies' narrative, which is that we don't care about Muslim lives."

While several lawmakers said they opposed full pardons, especially before evidence is considered at courts-martial, Trump had the backing of at least some on Capitol Hill, including from Republican Rep. Duncan Hunter, a Marine veteran from California, who is among the people who has long lobbied the president to pardon Gallagher.

Officials from several veterans organizations declined to comment on the reports. In a statement, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America wrote the organization would not take a side, but warned Memorial Day, meant to honor troops who died in battle, was not the appropriate moment for such pardons.

"This is inherently controversial," the IAVV statement reads. "Rolling out these decisions over Memorial Day [and] distracting from a time that is meant to be a meaningful moment of reflection is very concerning."

White House, Pentagon and Justice Department spokespersons declined to comment on the Times report. Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan said Tuesday that he would not "speculate on any of the pardons," directing questions to the White House.

At the Pentagon this week, some defense officials said privately that there was little support among top officers for Trump's reported pardon proposal. Two senior military officials, who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak for the Defense Department, said top officials had discussed the New York Times report, but it was not clear if those objections had been raised firsthand with Trump.

Pardons affect order, discipline

Pardoning servicemembers accused of committing war crimes before they face a judge could undermine the key military tenets of good order and discipline necessary for the military to function properly, said Rachel VanLandingham, an associate professor of law at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and a former Air Force judge advocate.

VanLandingham, who decried Behenna's pardon, worried additional pardons could discourage rank and file troops from following the orders of their commanders, who are charged with ensuring troops are well-trained on rules of engagement, military ethics and the law of war. She said such pardons risked dissuading servicemembers from adhering to those rules and ethics, if they believe they would not face punishment for wrongdoing, such as killing unarmed individuals or civilians.

Trump would be "betraying everyone in uniform who trusts that the rules that 99 percent of them follow — that when they are violated, folks are going to be held accountable," VanLandingham said. "If someone thinks they are going to be judge, jury and



J. PAT CARTER/The Washington Post

Former Army 1st Lt. Michael Behenna, who was pardoned by President Donald Trump on May 6, was convicted in the shooting death of an unarmed, naked Iraqi man suspected of being a member of al-Qaida, the Army said.

executive and decides 'I'm going to kill this guy because he's ISIS,' but [the enemy fighter is] out of the fight, and you kill him anyway — that is called disobedience of orders. It's called murder.

"We're no better than ISIS or al-Qaida or any of the terrorist groups we fight if that's how we fight," she said.

Two retired four-star generals were among the people to express concern.

Retired Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, took to Twitter on Tuesday to condemn pre-trial pardons.

"Absent evidence of innocence or injustice the wholesale pardon of US servicemembers accused of war crimes signals our troops and allies that we don't take the Law of Armed Conflict seriously," wrote Dempsey, who retired in 2015. "Bad message. Bad precedent. Abandonment of moral responsibility. Risk to us."

Retired Marine Gen. Charles C. Krulak, a former commandant of the Corps who retired in 1999, added that pardoning those individuals would "betray these ideals and undermine decades of precedent in American military justice that has contributed to making our country's fighting forces the envy of the world."

Damage to the US

Carpenter, the former Army lawyer, said he worried pardoning suspected and convicted war criminals could damage the American military's relationship with leaders in Iraq and Afghanistan, where U.S. troops have spent the better part of two decades fighting.

Leaders in those countries have an interest in seeing American troops who commit crimes in their countries held accountable, he said.

As part of agreements with governments to maintain troops in those nations, U.S. servicemembers are exempt from local jurisdiction, but any alleged crimes that they commit in those nations are expected to be investigated and, if necessary, prosecuted by the American military. Carpenter said pardons could signal to allies that the United States does not take accusations of criminality seriously.

"He makes it harder to build coalitions for future conflicts, because we lose our credibility as leaders in the rule of law," he said.

If leaders of other nations made such a move, Carpenter said they would likely be labeled a war criminal.

"If Trump does what we think he might, he will be taking a bunch of unrelated crimes, grouping them together, and saying — after the fact — that he condones those crimes," Carpenter said. "He is essentially saying that it is OK for American servicemembers to unlawfully kill people in these combat zones — and these people are predominantly Muslim. I think that if any other world leader did that, we would label that world leader a war criminal."



Photo released by the office of Rep. Duncan Hunter

Former Green Beret Matthew L. Golsteyn is accused of shooting an unarmed Afghan in 2010, who he believed was a Taliban bombmaker responsible for the deaths of two Marines.

The accusations

Gallagher, the Navy SEAL, faces charges of murder raised by other members of his unit, SEAL Team 8, who claim he regularly shot indiscriminately at civilians while they were imprisoned in northern Iraq as part of Operation Inherent Resolve in 2017. They also accused the 19-year veteran of stabbing to death a young, injured ISIS fighter who had been taken prisoner and then performing his reeminent ceremony over the body.

His lawyers have claimed Gallagher is innocent of all of the charges and Hunter has backed his cause, telling reporters he has seen evidence — footage from a helmet-mounted camera — that could clear the SEAL. That evidence has been barred from public view by the judge overseeing his case. Gallagher is scheduled to face a general court-martial set to begin May 28 in San Diego.

Trump has previously shown some level of support for Gallagher, announcing in March that he would move the SEAL and recipient of the Bronze Star Medal with combat "V" for valor out of the brig and into "less restrictive" pretrial confinement, in "honor of his past service to our country."

Support, too, stands accused of murder. The former Green Beret is accused of shooting an unarmed Afghan in 2010, who he believed was a Taliban bombmaker responsible for the deaths of two Marines serving under Golsteyn. Army officials have said Golsteyn admitted to the killing and subsequent burning of the man's body during a 2011 CIA job interview. His case was referred last week to a general court-martial, which will occur at Fort Bragg, N.C., but has yet to be scheduled.

Like Gallagher's case, Trump has expressed interest in Golsteyn's case and labeled the former Green Beret a "U.S. Military hero," in a tweet. Trump vowed he would review that case "at the request of many."

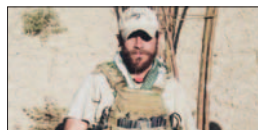
"He could face the death penalty from our own government after he admitted to killing a Terrorist bomb maker while overseas," the president tweeted in December. Lawyers for Gallagher and Golsteyn have stated publicly their clients are innocent of the charges that they face.

Behenna, who was pardoned by Trump on May 6, was convicted in the shooting death of an unarmed, naked Iraqi man suspected of being a member of al-Qaida, the Army said.

In court, Behenna testified he made a unilateral decision to question the prisoner, disobeying an order from his command to transport the prisoner back to his village. He claimed the shooting at a railroad culvert, was committed in self-defense as the prisoner lunged for him and attempted to take his weapon.

Lawmakers urge restraint

On Capitol Hill, the potential pardons faced condemnation and urges for Trump



FACEBOOK

Navy SEAL Edward Gallagher is facing charges of premeditated murder and other offenses in connection with the fatal stabbing of a teenage Islamic State prisoner under his care in Iraq.

to wait until after Gallagher's and Golsteyn's cases go to trial.

Military veterans Reps. Ted Lieu, D-Calif., and Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas, both urged Trump in statements to wait to make a decision until evidence had been laid out before a judge.

"As a former active duty JAG, I know the main purpose of the [Uniform Code of Military Justice] is to impose good order & discipline, which [President George] Washington called the soul of an army," Lieu tweeted. "The charges against Gallagher are deadly serious. [Trump] should not circumvent the court-martial process. Let military jurors decide."

Rep. Ruben Gallego, an Iraq War veteran who is a member of the House Armed Services Committee, said he would speak loudly against any Trump plans to issue such pardons for war crimes. In a series of tweets, Gallego railed against the potential move, especially highlighting the Gallagher case.

"True warfighters don't commit atrocities and kill innocent little girls," Gallego, D-Ariz., tweeted Sunday. "These actions only make a warfighter's job more dangerous."

Not everyone agreed. Hunter, on Twitter, thanked Trump for the potential grant of clemency, especially for Gallagher, who Hunter claims is innocent.

"You are showing tremendous courage in standing up for justice for our combat warriors," Hunter, a former Marine officer who fought in Iraq, tweeted, tagging the president.

A spokesman for Hunter said Tuesday that the congressman's office had not received official word from the White House whether pardons in these cases were imminent.

But Hunter believes, at least in Gallagher's case, a pardon "was certainly warranted," said Michael Harrison, a spokesman for the lawmaker.

Harrison cited issues raised by the SEAL's defense attorney in the case, including recent court documents reported by The Associated Press that accused prosecutors of sending emails bugged with an internet tracking device to defense lawyers and a journalist, who had received leaked documents in the case.

Congressman Hunter has long expressed his concern that the Gallagher case is just one of many in which military prosecutors are more focused on advancing their careers with a high-profile case at the expense of our warfighters that are serving multiple tours and making great sacrifices to do the job they have been tasked to do." Harrison wrote in an email. "Congressman Hunter will remain a relentless advocate for our warfighter and work to see that some necessary changes take place."

Stars and Stripes reporter Claudia Giraldez contributed to this story. dickstein.corey@stripes.com Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

WAR ON TERRORISM

'American Taliban' to be released

John Walker Lindh to go free after nearly two decades in federal prison

By MATTHEW BARAKAT
Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — John Walker Lindh, the young Californian who became known as the American Taliban after he was captured by U.S. forces in the invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, is set to go free after nearly two decades in prison.

But conditions imposed recently on Lindh's release, slated for Thursday, make clear that authorities remain concerned about the threat he could pose once free.

Lindh converted to Islam as a teenager after seeing the film "Malcolm X" and went overseas to study Arabic and the Quran. In November 2000, he went to Pakistan and from there made his way to Afghanistan. He joined the Taliban, and was with them on Sept. 11, 2001, when al-Qaida terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The U.S. attacked Afghanistan after the country failed to turn over al-Qaida leader Osama bin

Laden. Lindh was captured in a battle with Northern Alliance fighters in late 2001. He was present when a group of Taliban prisoners launched an attack that killed Johnny Micheal "Mike" Spann, a CIA officer who had been interrogating Lindh and other Taliban prisoners.

Television footage of a bearded, wounded Lindh captured among Taliban fighters created an international sensation, and he was brought to the U.S. to face charges of conspiring to kill Spann and providing support to terrorists. Eventually, he struck a plea bargain in which he admitted illegally providing support to the Taliban but denied a role in Spann's death. Lindh received a 20-year prison sentence. He served roughly 17 years and five months, including two months when he was in military detention. Federal inmates who exhibit good behavior typically serve only 85 percent of their sentence.

His probation officer asked the court to impose additional restric-



CNN/AP

John Walker Lindh is seen in an image taken from a 2001 video broadcast soon after his capture. Lindh, who became known as the American Taliban after he was captured by U.S. forces in the invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, is set to go free Thursday.

tions on Lindh while he remains on supervised release for the next three years. Lindh initially opposed but eventually acquiesced to the restrictions, which include monitoring software on his internet devices, requiring that his online communications be conducted in English and that he undergo mental health counseling; and forbidding him from possessing or viewing extremist material, holding a passport of any kind, or leaving the U.S.

The Bureau of Prisons said Lindh rejected an interview re-

quest submitted by The Associated Press, and his lawyer declined comment. But there have been reports that Lindh's behavior in prison has created cause for concern. Foreign Policy magazine reported in 2017 that an investigation by the National Counterterrorism Center found that Lindh "continued to advocate for global jihad and to write and translate violent extremist texts."

Some have criticized Lindh's pending release. In March, the legislature in Alabama, where Spann grew up, adopted a resolu-

tion calling it "an insult to Agent Johnny Micheal Spann's heroic legacy and his remaining family members."

In addition, Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., and Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., wrote a letter last week to the Bureau of Prisons expressing concern.

"We must consider the security and safety implications for our citizens and communities who will receive individuals like John Walker Lindh who continue to openly call for extremist violence," they wrote.

Progress for Afghan women, democracy is vulnerable

By PAMELA CONSTABLE
The Washington Post

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghans often express fears that a Taliban return to power would bring a reversal of the gains in democracy and women's rights made during nearly 18 years of civilian rule.

But in the past two weeks, a woman's killing on a Kabul street and a chaotic brawl in parliament have exposed the tenuous nature of these gains, the permanent specter of violence, and the stubborn grip of male pride and ethnic rivalry in this traditional, conflict-steeped society.

Mina Mangal seemed the perfect symbol of a successful, urbanized Afghan woman. The former TV news presenter and active social media commentator was working as an adviser in parliament. She spoke with poise and wrote with boldness. In recent posts, she had hinted that her life was in danger.

On May 11, as Mangal was leaving home for work, she was shot dead at close range. Police ascribed the killing to a family dispute, and it soon emerged that there was another side to this young woman's life — a side over which she had no control.

According to her family, Mangal had been unhappily married to an abusive man in an arranged match. Her family sought legal protection, the couple separated and she filed for divorce. At one point, her mother told Afghan media, Mangal was abducted and beaten by her husband and his relatives.

After she was killed, her mother said she was certain the enraged ex-husband had done it. Officials have not publicly identified him or any other suspects.

In a conservative Afghan village, where women have little freedom and codes of honor and revenge are ingrained, such a crime might have gone unnoticed. Today, the United Nations reports that more than half of Afghan women have experienced domestic violence. The rate is 35% world-

wide and often higher in impoverished countries.

But this brazen attack took place in the capital, where Afghan women hold legislative office, cover the news, work and study without fear. Mangal's killing, coming as women's groups have been sounding the alarm about a Taliban comeback, made such gains suddenly seem ephemeral.

The macho mentality, entrenched in Afghan society during decades of conflict, also pervades a political culture that President Ashraf Ghani hoped to turn into a modern technocracy. On Sunday, it was on hotbedded display as the new parliament held its first session in a majestic, copper-domed building donated by India in 2016.

As votes were being tallied from an election for speaker of a house, a chaotic argument erupted on the crowded stage. A man brandishing a hammer rushed up, chased by security guards. No one was injured, but the fight continued Monday with rival legislators sealing and breaking down a door.

The counterevents illustrated the internal obstacles — especially ethnic and personal power struggles — that continue to undermine Afghanistan's aspirations to democratic order despite years of international support and coaching. There were no Taliban insurgents in the chamber, just an uneasy cross-section of Afghan politics: young professionals and old warlords, women in high heels and headscarves, turbaned elders not terribly distant from Taliban thinking.

At stake in the poll were patronage and power. One main candidate was a wealthy contractor from the Tajik north, the other a professional from the Pashtun south. The man with the hammer was supporting the contractor, who refused to concede after losing by a single vote.

One social reformer and commentator, noting that a group of female legislators had tried to calm the parliamentary brawl, suggested a sensible — if unprecedented in Afghanistan — way to avoid recurrences: Elect a woman as speaker of the house.

Base: About 600 airmen to be deployed to the site on six-month tours

FROM FRONT PAGE

For years, the U.S. military has operated drones out of Niger's capital of Niamey. But a decision was made to set up a new site to the north in Agadez, which would extend the drones' reach for more effective surveillance and reconnaissance missions in the volatile Lake Chad Basin area as well as Libya.

There are a range of militant groups that operate in the region, but Islamic State in West Africa has emerged as a top U.S. Africa Command concern around the borders of Niger, Nigeria and Chad.

Technically, the base in Agadez is Nigerian, but the U.S. has exclusive rights to about 20 percent of the compound's 9-mile perimeter. Military officials have declined

to say how many drones or what other types of aircraft will be based at the facility.

While the mission at Agadez will focus on surveillance, Niger's government granted the U.S. authority in 2018 to carry out armed drone flights in the country. That host nation approval was granted soon after the October 2017 ambush in Niger that left four U.S. soldiers dead.

When the Agadez mission finally begins, about 600 airmen are expected to be deployed to the site on six-month tours, military officials have said.

"The U.S. Air Force is committed to supporting Niger in the opening of the new runway ... and responding to regional security issues," Hart said in a statement.

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver

NATION

Trump demands end of impeachment probes

By LISA MASCARO
AND MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump abruptly quit a meeting with congressional Democrats on Wednesday with a flat declaration he would no longer work with them unless they drop their investigations in the aftermath of the Trump-Russia report.

After the truncated meeting with the Democratic leaders, scheduled for a discussion of U.S. infrastructure problems, Trump lashed out at Speaker Nancy Pelosi for her comment earlier in the morning on Capitol Hill that she believed the president engaged in a “cover up” of the Russia probe. The president then strode to the Rose Garden where aides had gathered reporters and TV cameras for his demand that Congress drop its investigations that are increasingly leading to talk of what he called the “i-word” — impeachment.

“I walked into the room and I told Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi I want to do infrastructure,” he said, referring to the top Democratic senator, New York’s Chuck Schumer.

“But you know what we can’t do it under these circumstances,” Trump said. “So get these phony investigations over.”

Pelosi said Trump “just took a pass” on working on national infrastructure problems. She said she would be praying for him.

She told reporters after a private meeting of House Democrats that Trump is “engaged in a cover up,” even as she tried to tamp down some Democrats’ rush toward an impeachment inquiry in their showdown with the White House.

Pelosi and five of her top investigative committee leaders spoke with fellow Democrats after an increasing number called for



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., responds to reporters as she departs after meeting Tuesday with House Democrats, many calling for impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump.

the beginning of an impeachment inquiry following special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into Russia election meddling and contacts with the Trump campaign.

Those Democrats say the move would not necessarily be aimed at removing the president, but instead to bolster their position in court as Trump has broadly stonewalled their investigations. Some two dozen House Democrats have signed on.

With her leadership team, Pelosi, who has resisted pressure to impeach, pointed rank-and-file Democrats toward the legal battles that she said have already found success in forcing Trump to comply with

investigations.

“We do believe it’s important to follow the facts,” Pelosi told reporters afterward. “We believe that no one is above the law, including the president of the United States, and we believe that the president of the United States is engaged in a cover-up — in a cover-up.”

A growing number of Democrats, incensed by former White House counsel Don McGahn’s defiance Tuesday of a House panel’s subpoena for testimony, have confronted Pelosi and pushed her and other leaders to act.

Pelosi has said she believes Trump is

“goading” Democrats into impeachment. And Trump appeared to relish the Democratic division in a Wednesday tweet: “The Democrats are getting ZERO work done in Congress.”

Democrats leaving the meeting appeared to be taking Pelosi’s words into consideration. Tennessee Rep. Steve Cohen, who called for the impeachment inquiry on Tuesday, said he could see both sides.

Of leaders’ reluctance, Cohen said “it’s a political concern rather than an actual Constitutional one.”

Rep. Katie Hill, D-Calif., freshman from a swing district, wants to let court actions play out a bit, and is undecided on starting an impeachment inquiry.

“I think that we’re seeing the drumbeat moving in that direction,” Hill said. The more Trump “defies us, the more that it’s becoming an inevitability. But I don’t think that the caucus as a whole is there yet.”

Inside the room, others largely backed Pelosi’s approach, according to a person granted anonymity to discuss the private meeting. Another Democrat in the room said there were no fireworks.

Still, Some Democratic leaders, while backing Pelosi, also signaled that a march to impeachment may become inevitable.

“We are confronting what might be the largest, broadest cover-up in American history,” Majority Leader Steny Hoyer told reporters Tuesday. If a House inquiry “leads to other avenues including impeachment,” the Maryland Democrat said, “so be it.”

But South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, the No. 3 Democrat in the House, counseled caution just before the meeting. A majority of Democrats would support impeachment, Clyburn said, “just not now.” He told CNN the House should follow a methodical process to get to the facts about Trump’s actions.

Leaders of both parties make progress on debt, spending talks

By ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Top leaders of both parties in Congress made progress Tuesday on two must-do items on the legislative agenda: averting automatic budget cuts and meeting a deadline later this year to increase the government’s borrowing limit.

But after a flurry of optimism at midday, a deal proved elusive after an initial look at the numbers, with Democrats demanding dollar-for-dollar increases for defense and nondefense accounts plus billions of dollars more for the Census and veterans health care.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., who’s been a key force in getting budget negotiations up and running, said both the debt limit increase and the outlines of a two-year spending agreement would likely be merged into one package if a deal can be worked out.

Driving the bipartisan talks is the desire to avoid automatic spending cuts that threaten to hit the Pentagon and other fed-

eral agencies with budget reductions averaging 10 percent. At the same time, increasing the debt limit is required to avert a first-ever, market-quaking default on government obligations like interest payments and Social Security benefits.

It would also minimize the chances of a repeat of the 35-day government shutdown of December and January.

“The American people have given us divided government,” McConnell said. “We’ve got to talk to each other.”

Tuesday’s meeting included Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney and the top four leaders of Congress, including powerful House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. They returned for a second session later Tuesday and adjourned with plans to reconvene soon.

“We’re making progress,” added House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif.

McConnell met with President Donald Trump last week and warned him that failure to reach a pact with Democrats could lead to

endless bickering over the length of stopgap measures to prevent a government shutdown or put the government on course for \$71 billion in cuts to the Pentagon.

The goal is to set an overall limit for agency budgets appropriated by lawmakers every year to permit the annual round of appropriations bills, expected to total more than \$1.3 trillion, to advance with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. It would represent the fifth two-year budget agreement since a 2011 budget and debt bill set the stage for much-reviled automatic cuts known as sequestration. Without an agreement, the automatic cuts would total \$125 billion.

In his March budget submission, Trump employed book-keeping gimmicks to protect the defense budget and called for sweeping cuts to domestic programs. Just last week, he decided he went too far in cutting popular environmental restoration programs for Florida’s Everglades and the Great Lakes and reversed those cuts, along with cuts to the Special Olympics that were widely panned.



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Tuesday leaves a meeting with top congressional leaders, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., on a potential deal to raise the budget caps.

Trump’s budget was universally seen as a nonstarter with Democrats controlling the House and didn’t have many fans on the GOP side, either.

McConnell went out of his way to say Mnuchin is taking the lead for the administration rather than Mulvaney, a former tea party congressman, or hard-line White House budget director Russell Vought.

“I’m hopeful and optimistic that the secretary of the Treasury speaks for the president in

these discussions and we hopefully soon will reach an agreement,” McConnell said.

Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Pelosi issued a statement Tuesday evening that demanded “parity” between military accounts favored by Republicans and domestic programs dear to Democrats — plus up to \$7 billion for the decennial U.S. Census and an additional \$10 billion or so for a relatively new program that permits veterans to see private-sector doctors.

NATION



ANDREW HARNIK/AP

A new bill offered by Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., addresses racial disparities in maternal health care.

Harris' bill aimed at bias in maternal care

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris is offering a new bill to address racial disparities in maternal health care, one of several plans by 2020 Democratic presidential candidates on the issue.

Harris' bill, first introduced in 2018, would create some \$150 million in grant programs to medical schools and states to fight implicit racial bias in health care for women. The legislation, cosponsored in the House by Rep. Alma Adams, D-N.C., is aimed at improving medical care for groups of women who, research suggests, might be denied first rate care because of their race.

The government confirmed this month that black women who bear children die at a rate that is three times higher than that of white women. Native American and Alaskan women die at a rate that is 2.5 times higher than that of white women. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says about 700 women in the U.S. die from pregnancy-related com-

plexions annually.

Tennis star Serena Williams raised the profile on the issue last year, saying the birth of her daughter via C-section was harrowing, in part because medical professionals second-guessed her when she complained of a shortness of breath.

In a Vogue magazine interview in 2018, Williams discussed developing several small blood clots in her lungs while in the hospital after Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. was born in September 2017. In the interview, Williams said she requested a CT scan, only to be given an ultrasound of her legs. The episode was seen by some as evidence that even an elite athlete who is black can have trouble getting the care that she needs.

Other Democratic presidential candidates including Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts have proposed bills aimed at improving maternal care.

Biden: Congress should protect abortion rights

BY BILL BARROW
AND ELANA SCHOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Joe Biden would support Congress enshrining abortion rights into federal law "should it become necessary," his presidential campaign said Tuesday, following several other Democratic candidates in promising to take that step if elected president.

The hot button issue has shot to the forefront of the Democratic primary following a spate of new Republican-backed state laws curbing access to abortion. With all the two dozen Democratic White House hopefuls supportive of abortion rights, the debate in the party has centered on how aggressive they should be if the Supreme Court were to eventually overturn legalized abortion nationwide.

Biden released a video Tuesday blasting the GOP-backed state laws as "pernicious" and "wrong." He stopped short in the video of endorsing congressional action and offered no specifics on how he would defend Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision that is now potentially threatened with new legal challenges.

Asked by The Associated Press whether Biden believed the high court decision should be codified in law, the campaign initially pointed to the video, then later added that the former vice president would support legislation "should it become necessary." A campaign aide then clarified that Biden would support action immediately, regardless of whether the Supreme Court overturned Roe.

The campaign's responses high-

light what Biden, a devout Roman Catholic, once called his "middle of the road" approach on abortion. As a young senator, he expressed reservations that the Supreme Court "went too far" in its abortion decision. Since then, he's joined the mainstream of the Democratic Party in defending Roe, though as a senator he sometimes voted with abortion-rights foes on bills related to late-term terminations.

As a moderate figure in a party whose loudest factions often embrace more doctrinaire positions, Biden is already walking a tightrope in the Democratic Party. And his evolving statements on abortion over his four decades in politics could give an opening to rivals who have seized on the Republican push to overturn Roe as a way to affirm their commitment to abortion rights.

Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Cory Booker of New Jersey and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts endorsed new federal laws safeguarding women's right to a legal abortion after Alabama passed a statute that amounts to an outright abortion ban. Sen. Kamala Harris of California also has supported the codification of Roe on the campaign trail, and Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont told the AP on Tuesday that he backs federal lawmaking on abortion rights.

Several of the senators visited the steps of the Supreme Court on Tuesday for one of hundreds of nationwide rallies organized by activist groups to protest state-level abortion restrictions. Gillibrand urged an energetic crowd of more than 100 people to "organize, advocate and vote" in order to ensure abortion rights are protected.

Biden did not attend such a rally Tuesday, instead releasing the video as he was in Orlando, Fla., for a campaign fundraiser.

"What this is all about is trying to get an appeal to the Supreme Court in the hope that the conservative justice the president has in fact put on the court will vote to overrule Roe v. Wade, the law of the land," Biden said. "It's wrong. It's pernicious. And we have to stop it."

Referencing his faith, he's noted often that he believes his church's teachings that abortion is morally wrong but added that shouldn't dictate public policy.

"I refuse to impose my religious beliefs on other people," he said in his Tuesday email to supporters.



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Dems decry attempt to close civil service agency

By LISA REIN
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Top House Democrats on Tuesday savaged the Trump administration's plan to blow up the Office of Personnel Management, calling the effort to close the major federal agency a backdoor power play to weaken the federal workforce.

The hostile reception, alongside support from Republicans, left the plan's chances in doubt and raised the possibility that the administration would dismantle some of the agency's functions on its own, even if Congress doesn't pass legislation to do it.

"Today is a reckoning," said Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va., chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee's panel on government operations, which held a three-hour hearing titled

"The Administration's War on a Merit Based Civil Service."

"There is no clear and convincing reason for dismantling this key federal agency," Connolly said, calling the plan "a reckless endgame in search of a rationale" that was rushed through and would be unlikely to be approved by Congress.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., chairman of the Oversight Committee, made a brief appearance at the start of the hearing to question whether the administration had made its case adequately. The proposed breakup, which has consumed the personnel agency for more than a year, would pull apart OPM and its 5,565 federal employees and divide it among three other departments.

Most of its functions would move into the General Services Administration, the government's

real estate and procurement arm. The OPM's massive, backlogged security clearance system already is in the process of shifting to the Defense Department, through legislation previously passed by Congress.

The OPM's leadership would shift from an agency director responsible for federal workforce policy to a position within the White House budget office that the president would appoint directly — but that would not require Senate confirmation.

Critics say the proposal is a ploy to politicize the civil service by installing political appointees who are close to the White House.

Trump officials formally proposed the shift last week, sending proposed legislation to Congress that would transfer most of the agency's functions to the GSA and shift its leadership. No employees would be fired, and most would stay at their desks, since right now the GSA could not physically accommodate them. The administration estimates that zeroing out the agency would save \$23 million a year through employee attrition and consolidation of contracts and services.

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NATION



DAVID CARLSON, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH/AP

Tony Brinker, a volunteer with the Augusta Fire Protection District, cuts trees that were blocking Highway 94 on Tuesday near Augusta, Mo. A long line of storms hit the St. Louis area Tuesday evening.

Another day of tornadoes in Midwest, but St. Louis spared

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — A dangerous storm system in the Midwest produced dozens of tornadoes for the second consecutive day Tuesday, demolishing a racetrack grandstand and damaging buildings in a wild animal park in Missouri but sparing St. Louis, the biggest city in its path.

Two deaths, both in Missouri, were blamed on the severe weather that started in the Southern Plains on Monday night and moved to the northeast. Missouri and parts of Illinois and Arkansas were in the crosshairs Tuesday. By Wednesday, the storm was expected to move into Great Lakes region, where it would weaken.

The skies grew dark over St. Louis before nightfall Tuesday and a tornado warning was issued for the city and surrounding suburbs, but the storm passed

overhead without producing the rotation that often spawns tornadoes and the city was mostly spared except for heavy rain.

The weather service Storm Prediction Center website listed 37 reports of tornadoes on Tuesday in Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

A tornado early Tuesday near Tulsa International Airport injured one person and damaged about a dozen homes. The airport was unscathed, but passengers were moved into shelters for about 30 minutes and several flights were delayed.

Storms Monday evening flipped campers at Lucas Oil Speedway in Hickory County, Mo., injuring seven people, four of whom were taken to hospitals. The speedway's grandstand also was destroyed, forcing cancellation of racing this weekend that

was expected to draw about 3,000 campers.

Another twister Tuesday afternoon hit a drive-thru wild animal park in southern Missouri. Webster County Emergency Management Director Tom Simmons said buildings were damaged at the Wild Animal Safari near Strafford, but there were no reports that people or animals were injured. All of the animals were accounted for.

Heavy rain was called a contributing factor in the deaths of two people in a traffic accident Tuesday near Springfield, Mo. The Missouri State Highway Patrol said an SUV skidded across the center of U.S. 160 and struck a tractor-trailer, killing both people in the SUV, Brandon Beasley, 23, and his wife, Christine, 24, of Willard, Mo.

Judge questions tougher Miss. abortion law

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — A federal judge indicated Tuesday that he is likely to block a Mississippi law that will ban most abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected.

The new law puts a cutoff point for abortion at about six weeks, when many women may not yet know they're pregnant.

U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves heard arguments about a request from the state's only abortion clinic, which wants him to block the law from taking effect July 1, as scheduled. Reeves is the same judge who ruled last year that Mississippi's 15-week ban is unconstitutional because it would prohibit access to abortion before a fetus could survive outside the pregnant woman's body. Viability is generally considered to be about 23 or 24 weeks.

In an indication of which way he is leaning on the request to block the new law, Reeves asked attorneys: "Doesn't it boil down to: Six is less than 15?"

Mississippi is one of several states enacting abortion restrictions this year in hopes that the U.S. Supreme Court, with new conservative justices, will reevaluate and maybe overturn its 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationwide.

Reeves criticized lawmakers for passing an earlier ban after he struck down the one at 15 weeks.

"It sure smacks of defiance to this court," he said.

The state is appealing Reeves' ruling on the 15-week ban, and Republican Gov. Phil Bryant signed the new law in March. The state's only abortion clinic, Jack-

son Women's Health Organization, quickly sued the state.

Reeves said he would decide soon on the request to block the law, but did not indicate when he would issue a ruling.

Governors in Kentucky, Ohio and Georgia have signed laws on abortion once a fetal heartbeat is detected. Alabama's governor signed a measure making abortion a felony in nearly all cases.

The Mississippi law says physicians who perform abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected could face revocation of their state medical licenses. It also says abortions could be allowed after a fetal heartbeat is found if a pregnancy endangers a woman's life or one of her major bodily functions. Senators rejected an amendment that would have allowed exceptions for pregnancies caused by rape or incest.

Hillary Schneller, an attorney for the Center for Reproductive Rights, said the Mississippi law is "clearly unconstitutional" because it bans abortion before viability. If the law were to take effect, "Women will be forced to leave the state to obtain legal abortions ... or will be forced to remain pregnant against their will," Schneller said.

Mississippi Special Assistant Attorney General Paul Barnes said the law is not an outright ban on abortion but a limitation on when the procedure can be done.

"When a fetal heartbeat is detected, our position is it is constitutional" to prohibit abortion, Barnes said, adding that the state respectfully disagrees with Reeves' ruling on the 15-week ban.

Analysis finds kids' cholesterol levels improved despite high obesity rates

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Cholesterol levels in children and teens improved in the latest analysis of U.S. health surveys, yet only half of them had readings considered ideal.

Overall, 7% of kids had high cholesterol in surveys from 2009 to 2016. That was down from 10% a decade earlier. In children, high levels mean 200 or above and ideal measures are below 170.

The results were published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The researchers say the mixed bag of results could reflect stubborn rates of childhood obesity, offset by U.S. kids eating fewer

snack foods containing unhealthy trans fats. Manufacturers began phasing those out before a 2018 U.S. ban.

In the analysis, researchers used 1999-2016 government surveys of 26,000 kids aged 6 to 19 who had home interviews, physical exams and lab tests.

About 1 in 4 teens and 1 in 5 younger children had unhealthy levels of at least one of type of blood fat, including cholesterol and triglycerides.

High cholesterol in childhood can lead to changes that cause blood vessels to narrow, said Dr. Amanda Perak, the study's lead author and a heart specialist at Chicago's Lurie Children's Hospi-

tal. Those changes put kids at risk for heart attacks and other heart trouble in adulthood, she said.

In most cases, kids can improve cholesterol levels by adopting healthier habits — eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and less processed food, and exercising more, Perak said.

"Lifestyle contributes in the vast majority of cases," she said. Obesity contributes to unhealthy cholesterol levels yet rates have remained stagnant for U.S. kids and adults. In 2015-16, 21% of teens, 18% of children aged 6-11, and 40% of adults were obese, according to the most recent data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



AP

Dr. Amanda Perak, lead author of an analysis released Tuesday, says in most cases, kids can improve cholesterol levels by adopting healthier habits — eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains and less processed food, and exercising more.

NATION

Probe inconclusive on racist yearbook photo

Virginia governor has made few appearances since scandal broke

By BEN FINLEY
Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — An investigation ordered up by a Virginia medical school failed to determine whether Gov. Ralph Northam is in a 1984 yearbook photo of a man in blackface next to someone in a Ku Klux Klan hood.

Investigators with a law firm hired by Eastern Virginia Medical School said Wednesday they couldn't "conclusively determine" the identities of either person in the 35-year-old photo.

They also said they couldn't discern how the picture was placed on Northam's yearbook page, but found no evidence it was placed there by mistake or as a prank.

The findings are unlikely to have a major effect on state politics or Northam, who has been trying to regain his footing for several months.

Virginia politics was turned upside down in a matter of hours in early February after a conservative website posted a picture of Northam's medical school yearbook page. The Democratic governor issued two apologies within hours, initially indicating that he was one of the people in the pic-

ture. By midnight it appeared his entire political base was gone, with the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus, other key Democratic groups and top allies calling on him to resign.

Northam reversed course at a news conference the next day, saying he was convinced it was not him in the picture, while revealing that he did in fact wear blackface once decades ago, to look like Michael Jackson for a dance contest. Defying calls to resign, he said he wanted to focus his remaining three years in office on addressing longstanding racial inequities.

While he was all but invisible in February and much of March, the governor is making routine public appearances again.

And he's won praise from black lawmakers for several recent policy moves. Those include ending the suspension of driver's licenses for motorists with unpaid court fines and costs, and a review into how public schools teach the nation's racial history.

The heat for Northam to resign significantly lessened after scandal enveloped his potential successors. Two women publicly accused Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax of



STEVE HILBER/AP

A law firm has completed its investigation into how a racist photo appeared on a yearbook page for Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, left. Eastern Virginia Medical School said it failed to determine Northam is in a 1984 yearbook photo of a man in blackface next to someone in a Ku Klux Klan hood.

sexual assault, which he denies. And Attorney General Mark Herring announced he'd also worn blackface in college, just days after he too called on Northam to resign. Both Fairfax and Herring

also resisted calls to resign.

But the incident will forever mark Northam's time in office, and opponents still use it against him. House Majority Leader Del. Todd Gilbert recently said

Northam had chosen to "repair his own racist legacy," rather than protect victims of domestic abuse after the governor vetoed a bill requiring a mandatory jail term for repeat domestic abusers.

Wash. to be first state to allow human composting

By GENE JOHNSON
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Ashes to ashes, guts to dirt.

Gov. Jay Inslee signed legislation Tuesday making Washington the first state to approve composting as an alternative to burying or cremating human remains.

It allows licensed facilities to offer "natural organic reduction," which turns a body, mixed with substances such as wood chips and straw, into about two wheelbarrows' worth of soil in a span of several weeks.

Loved ones are allowed to keep the soil to spread, just as they might spread the ashes of someone who has been cremated — or even use it to plant vegetables or a tree.

"It gives meaning and use to what happens to our bodies after death," said Nora Menkin, executive director of the Seattle-based People's Memorial Association, which helps people plan for funerals.

Supporters say the method is an environmentally friendly alternative to cremation, which releases



TED S. WARREN/AP

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, center, signs a bill into law Tuesday that allows licensed facilities to offer "natural organic reduction," which turns a body, mixed with substances such as wood chips and straw, into soil in a span of several weeks.

carbon dioxide and particulates into the air, and conventional burial, in which people are drained of their blood, pumped full of formaldehyde and other chemicals that can pollute groundwater, and placed in a nearly indestructible coffin, taking up land.

"That's a serious weight on the earth and the environment as your final farewell," said Sen. Jamie Pedersen, the Seattle Democrat who sponsored the measure.

He said the legislation was inspired by his neighbor: Katrina Spade, who was an architecture

graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, when she began researching the funeral industry. She came up with the idea for human composting, modeling it on a practice farmers have long used to dispose of livestock.

She tweaked the process and found that wood chips, alfalfa and straw created a mixture of nitrogen and carbon that accelerates natural decomposition when a body is placed in a temperature- and moisture-controlled vessel and rotated.

900-pound Va. man pleads guilty from an ambulance

By DENISE LAVOIE
Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — A Virginia man who weighs more than 900 pounds pleaded guilty in a federal cocaine conspiracy case Tuesday during a hearing that was held in a courthouse loading dock as the defendant lay on a stretcher inside an ambulance.

U.S. Magistrate Judge David Novak said the court engaged in "some extraordinary procedures" Tuesday to deal with Kenneth Hicks' health issues and to "protect his dignity."

Hicks, 48, stayed inside the ambulance and wasn't visible to several of his family members and reporters who attended the hearing. He was visible to Novak and a prosecutor who sat at a table near the back of the ambulance.

The hearing was postponed last week when Hicks was brought to a hospital for an unspecified health issue after he was taken from his home.

Hicks, who lives in Emporia, was indicted along with 17 other people in a conspiracy to sell cocaine between 2013 and 2017.

He had his initial court appearance in March via video teleconference and was allowed to remain on bond in his home pending trial.

Because of various health issues, including his morbid obesity, Hicks — through his lawyer — asked for help in being brought to the courthouse for his plea hearing. Court documents in the case described Hicks as being confined to his bed and unable to dress himself or be dressed by others.

Novak approved a plan submitted by Hicks' defense lawyer and prosecutors to allow the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI and first responders to remove him from his home, either by placing him on a gurney and moving him through a doorway or by cutting open a large hole in a wall of his home in order to use a device capable of lifting his weight. Officials did not disclose how he was moved.

His plea hearing was originally scheduled for May 13. That hearing was postponed when he was taken to a Richmond hospital.

During the rescheduled hearing held on Tuesday, Hicks told Novak that he has been transferred to another hospital, is being given insulin and is being treated for several health issues.

Hicks faces a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in prison and a maximum sentence of 40 years. Novak scheduled his sentencing hearing for Sept. 4.

NATION

'Out of this world'

A sea dragon swims last week at the Birch Aquarium at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego.

Sea dragon exhibit dazzles visitors at Southern California aquarium

By JULIE WATSON
Associated Press

AT first glance, it looks like a branch of kelp, but then an eye moves among its leafy appendages, and ridges of tiny, translucent fins start to flutter, sending the creature gliding through the water like something from a fairy tale.

A Southern California aquarium has built what is believed to be one of the world's largest habitats for the surreal sea dragons, whose native populations off Australia are threatened by pollution, warming oceans and the illegal pet and alternative medicine trades.

The Birch Aquarium at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego hopes the exhibit, which opened this month, will lead to the leafy sea dragon, the lesser-known cousin of the seahorse, being bred for the first time in captivity.

"It literally just looked like a piece of kelp," said Steven Kowal, 25, who was visiting San Diego from Greensboro, N.C., and took time to see the exhibit. "It was crazy to me that it was, like, actually living and swimming around, so that's cool. I've never seen anything like that."

That's a common reaction.

"They look like something out of this world," said Leslee Matsushige, the aquarium's associate curator, who noted the sea dragons' amazing ability to cam-

ouflage themselves. "When people see them move, you hear them say, 'What? That's alive? Wow! That's crazy.'"

Scientists like Matsushige hope the creatures' magnetic power will prompt people to read the signs next to the tanks that outline ways to protect them and what can be done to make oceans healthier, such as picking up trash and stopping pollutants from going down the drain.

Few aquariums have sea dragons. There are only two types of sea dragons,

the leafy and the weedy, each representing its own genus. Both kinds are found only in a small area of temperate waters off the southern and western coasts of Australia.

Little is known about them because their populations are so small and in remote areas.

So far, only the weedy sea dragon, a bony fish that resembles seaweed when floating, has been bred in captivity, and only a handful of times.

The Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach was the first in the world to breed the weedy sea dragons in 2001. It also is trying to breed leafy sea dragons.

The Birch Aquarium's 18-foot-long tank has three leafy sea dragons — two males and one female — and 11 weedy sea dragons. The 5,300-gallon tank is a vast space, especially for the smaller leafy sea dragon, which grows to only about 14 inches in length. The tank has grassy plants, a sandy bottom and rocks.

Scientists hope the large space will foster breeding. Sea dragons mirror each other in a courtship dance, spiraling upward before the female deposits her eggs onto a patch on the underside of the male's tail.

Like seahorses, the male carries the young and gives birth.

"We're already seeing great courtship behaviors, and so we're hopeful we can get some egg transfers really soon," said Jenn Nero Moffatt, director of animal care at the Birch Aquarium.

The exhibit is the latest effort by the aquarium that is a world leader in seahorse propagation.

Sea dragons swim by spinning translucent fins while their tails act as rudders. They have no natural predators, in part because their slender bodies are covered by bony plates.

If both types of sea dragons can be bred, scientists believe it could reduce the number being taken illegally from the wild.



PHOTOS BY GREGORY BULL/AP

Visitors observe a tank holding sea dragons at the Birch Aquarium at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego.

WORLD

6 die in riots over Indonesian leader's win

By STEPHEN WRIGHT
AND FADLAN SYAM
Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesian President Joko Widodo said authorities have the volatile situation in the country's capital under control after six people died Wednesday in riots by supporters of his losing rival in last month's presidential election.

The clashes began Tuesday night when supporters of former Gen. Prabowo Subianto tried to force their way into the downtown offices of the election supervisory agency and have continued unabated since then. More than two dozen vehicles were burned as rioters took over neighborhoods in central Jakarta, throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at police who responded with tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets.

Flanked by the military chief and other top leaders, a grim-looking Widodo said, "I will work together with anyone to advance this country, but I will not tolerate anyone who disrupts the security, democratic processes and unity of our beloved nation."

Subianto, an ultra-nationalist politician, has refused to accept the official results of the April 17 election and instead declared himself the winner. The Election Commission on Tuesday said Widodo, the first Indonesian



ACHMAD IBRAHIM/AP

Supporters of the losing presidential candidate clash with police Wednesday in Jakarta, Indonesia. A number of people have died and vehicles burned as rioters took over neighborhoods in the capital, throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at police who then used tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets.

president from outside the Jakarta elite, had won 55.5% of the vote, securing the moderate technocrat a second term as leader of the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation. Subianto, an elite figure from a wealthy family connected to former dictator Su-

harto, also lost to Widodo in 2014. He has made four unsuccessful bids for the presidency since Suharto was ousted in 1998.

"The bottom line is the people who are protesting and rioting in the past 24 hours represent a small minority of Indonesian

voters and a small minority of Indonesian Muslims," said Alexander Ariefanto, an Indonesian politics expert at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

"The vast majority of both clearly accepted the election

results. By tacitly backing the protesters, Prabowo has lost any remaining legitimacy he had left and clearly shows his true colors as a narcissistic New Order-era relic," Ariefanto said, referring to the Suharto era.

Rudiantara, the communications and information technology minister, said social media including Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp will be restricted on a temporary basis to prevent the spread of hoaxes and inflammatory content. He said messaging systems will still work for text and audio but photos and videos will be blocked or slowed.

National police chief Tito Karnavian said the people who died in the rioting were hit by gunshots or blunt devices. Authorities are still investigating the causes of death and are not ruling out the involvement of third parties acting as provocateurs.

"There are attempts to create martyrs, blaming security officials for building public anger," he said.

The government had deployed some 50,000 police and soldiers in Jakarta in anticipation of protests following the official election results.

Subianto's campaign plans to challenge the election result in the Constitutional Court. They allege massive fraud in the world's third-largest democracy but have provided no credible evidence.

N Korea calls Biden 'fool of low IQ' over his criticism of Kim

By KIM TONG-HYUNG
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea has labeled Joe Biden a "fool of low IQ" and an "imbecile bereft of elementary quality as a human being" after the U.S. presidential hopeful called North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a tyrant during a recent speech.

Pyeongyang's official Korean Central News Agency on Wednesday said the former American vice president had insulted the country's supreme leadership and committed an "intolerable and serious politically-motivated provocation" against the North.

Biden during a campaign launch in Philadelphia on Saturday accused President Donald Trump of cozying up to "dictators and tyrants" like Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"What he uttered is just sophism of an imbecile bereft of elementary quality as a human being, let alone a politician," KCNA said.

The piece, labeled a commentary, said Biden had "gone reckless and senseless" seized by ambition for power. "It went on to mention apparent Biden gaffes,

such as once appearing to fall asleep during a speech by President Barack Obama.

"It is by no means accidental that here is nonstop comment over his bid for candidacy that he is not worth pinning hope on, backed by the jeer that he is a fool of low IQ," KCNA said.

It mocked Biden's belief that he was "the most popular presidential candidate." "This is enough to make a cat laugh," the report said.

There was no immediate reaction from the Biden camp, possibly due to the late hour in the United States.

North Korea has often unleashed crude insults against U.S. and South Korean politicians to criticize what it sees as slanderous remarks toward its leadership or hostile diplomatic and military policies against Pyongyang. The insults have included racist and sexist diatribes, including when the North called Obama "a monkey" and former South Korean President Park Geun-hye, the country's first female leader, a prostitute.

During tensions created by a provocative run in missile tests in 2017, Kim called Trump a "men-



MATT ROUQUE/AP

North Korea on Wednesday labeled Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, above, a 'fool of low IQ' and an 'imbecile bereft of elementary quality as a human being.'

tally deranged U.S. dotard" after he said that the United States would "totally destroy North Korea" if forced to defend itself or its allies.

The North's description of Trump dramatically improved after Kim initiated diplomacy with Washington and Seoul in 2018 while attempting to leverage his nuclear arsenal for economic and security benefits. The nuclear negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang stalled in February when a summit between Kim and Trump collapsed over mismatched demands in sanctions relief and disarmament.

New Philippine Senate to be more pro-Duterte

By JIM GOMEZ
Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine president's allies won a majority of the 12 Senate seats at stake in midterm elections, official results showed Wednesday, while the opposition's shutout heralds a stronger grip on power by a leader accused of massive human rights violations.

Election officials proclaimed the winners after finishing the official count of the May 13 elections overnight. The tally had been delayed by glitches in automated counting machines.

President Rodrigo Duterte backed eight winning aspirants to half of the seats in the 24-member Senate, including his former national police chief, Ronald dela Rosa, who enforced Duterte's crackdown on illegal drugs in a campaign that left thousands of suspects dead and drew international condemnation.

Last week's vote has been seen as a gauge of public support for Duterte, who is midway through the single six-year term Philippine presidents are allowed under the constitution. His anti-drug crackdown, unorthodox leadership style, combative and sexist joke-laden outbursts, and contentious embrace of China have been the hallmarks of his presidency.

"Do I look like a rubberstamp?" Senator-elect Bong Go, a longtime Duterte aide, said when reporters asked him about concerns that the new Senate would be beholden to Duterte. But he stressed he would back the president's war against criminality, corruption and illegal drugs and would support a bill to reimpose the death penalty for heinous crimes and drug trafficking. Go said Duterte has not given any illegal orders to him or anyone he supervised.

Duterte's three children also won races for mayor, vice mayor and a congressional seat representing their southern home region of Davao city. Nearly 75 percent of more than 63 million registered Filipinos cast their votes in a strong turnout.

Analysts say many Filipinos seem more open to authoritarianism due to failures of past liberal leaders.

The president has aimed for stronger leverage in the traditionally more independent Senate to bolster his legislative agenda. That includes the return of the death penalty, lowering the age for criminal liability below the current 15, and revising the 1987 constitution primarily to allow a shift to a federal form of government, a proposal some critics fear may be a cover to remove term limits.

WORLD

US missile offer in play as Turkey stands by Russia

By SELCAN HACAOGLU
Bloomberg

Turkey is evaluating the latest U.S. proposal to sell its Patriot air-defense system even as it is determined to go through with a Russian missile deal that's angered the Trump administration.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has rebuffed American demands that Turkey delay the purchase of the batteries from Russia. Meanwhile, Turkey's top military official said army personnel were dispatched for training in Russia ahead of the delivery of the S-400 missile-defense system.

"The latest U.S. proposal dated March 28 had amendments on the price, co-production, upgrade and technology transfer, even though they don't exactly meet our demands," Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said. "Relevant bodies are continuing their evaluation and preparing their response. We have a principled stance and say we have relations with Russia and it is a done deal. Americans say 'no deal is a done deal.'"

The U.S. balked for years at selling its Patriot air defense system to Turkey and sharing its technology at the same time. In December, the State Department notified Congress that it had proposed the sale, a gambit seemingly designed to get Erdo-

gan to scrap the S-400 deal. Akar said the U.S. is "apparently very disturbed that a NATO member country is buying a system from a provider outside the U.S. and Europe."

Still, Turkey will send more personnel for S-400 training in the coming months and Russian military experts may also arrive in Turkey to help set up the systems, according to Akar. Moscow may bring forward the delivery date from July, Erdogan said.

Although Ankara remains engaged in talks with Washington, it's still asking for the transfer of the U.S. missile technology. Turkey has until the end of the first week of June to decide if it will buy Raytheon's U.S.-made Patriot missile defense system or follow through on an agreement to buy a Russian missile system, CNBC reported, citing multiple people familiar with the matter.

Turkey finds itself under threat on all fronts in a war-torn region and is working to minimize tensions, Akar said.

A Turkish military delegation is engaged in talks this week in Athens. It's a rare effort to defuse territorial disputes by overcoming past grievances in an attempt "to discuss all problems" with Greece in the Aegean Sea, the eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus, so that each side can put forth its own arguments on the table, Akar said.

May's future in peril as Brexit offer slammed

Associated Press

LONDON — British Prime Minister Theresa May was under pressure Wednesday to scrap a planned vote on her Brexit blueprint — and to resign — after her attempt at compromise got the thumbs-down from both her own Conservative Party and opposition lawmakers.

May plans to ask Parliament to vote next month on a bill implementing Britain's departure from the European Union.

Lawmakers have already rejected May's divorce deal with the EU three times, and Britain's long-scheduled departure date of March 29 passed with the country still in the 28-nation bloc.

In a last-ditch bid to secure support for her Brexit plan, May on Tuesday announced concessions including a promise to give Parliament a vote on whether to hold a new referendum on Britain's EU membership.

But opposition Labour Party

lawmakers dismissed the offer as too little too late, and pro-Brexit Conservatives accused her of capitulating to pro-EU demands.

May was expected to face a torrid session of criticism from all sides when she defends her Brexit deal in the House of Commons on Wednesday.

Labour Brexit spokesman Keir Starmer said May would reconsider coming back with a better offer that promised a "close economic relationship" with the EU and a new referendum.

Conservative lawmakers, meanwhile, were due to meet later Wednesday to discuss whether to attempt to topple May as party leader.

May has said she will announce a timetable for her departure once Parliament has voted on her Brexit bill. But with defeat of that bill looking likely, a growing number of Conservatives is pressing her to cancel the vote and quit even sooner.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LIONSGATE/AP

This rendering released by Lionsgate shows the atrium of Lionsgate Entertainment World, a virtual reality-heavy theme park set to open in July on Henggin Island in Zhuhai, China.

New theme park in China will feature 'Hunger Games,' 'Twilight'

By JONATHAN LANDRUM JR.
Associated Press

Some of Lionsgate's most popular film franchises from "Hunger Games" to "Twilight" will be brought to life when the studio opens what it calls the world's first vertical theme park in China this summer.

Lionsgate Entertainment World will offer several adventures including a virtual reality motorcycle ride based on "Twilight," a maximum-security prison break-out like in "Escape Plan" and a replica of The Capitol lobby from "Hunger Games," complete with shops where guests can fashion themselves in the film's distinctive culture.

More than 25 rides and virtual reality experiences will pack a sleek, futuristic looking bean-shaped building that stands 10 stories high. The theme park, which will also include attractions based on films such as "Divergent," "Now You See Me" and "Gods of Egypt," is scheduled to open in July on Henggin Island located in Zhuhai, China.

"We found a way to create this theme park experience inside of one box over multiple floors," she said. "It's a mix of all the cutting-edge attractions that you'll find in entertainment right now."

Brown said Lionsgate decided to create its first theme park to expand their international brand into China where films like "Twilight" and "Gods of Egypt" are popular. She said the studio hopes to capitalize off Zhuhai's emerging status as a tourist destination and its proximity to Macau, which is considered the "Las Vegas of China."

The Santa Monica, Calif.-based company expects to have around 1.5 million park goers this year.



This rendering shows the aerial view of Lionsgate Entertainment World.

The theme park will be a part of a large destination called Novotown, a multi-phase project that includes a hotel and office towers along with retail dining and entertainment. Future phases include plans for the National Geographic Ultimate Explorer and Real Madrid interactive experiences, as well as an international school will be built offering British-based education.

Here are some of the theme park's other features shown to The Associated Press during a recent sneak peek of the park's design and attractions:

■ **Flying, and fashion in "Hunger Games."** Based on the four-part film series starring Jennifer Lawrence as Katniss Everdeen, park visitors will journey through a motion simulator 3D ride experience called The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Flight Rebel Escape. It starts on the streets before riders board a vehicle that gets picked up by a hovercraft that flies through The Capitol.

Restaurants will feature a "Hunger Games"-themed menu with different dishes inspired by the film's various districts.

■ **Biking with wolves in "Twilight."** Guests will have a chance to spend time in Forks, the town where author Stephenie Meyer based her vampire novels before they were turned into movies.

Twilight Saga: Midnight Ride offers a chance for four to hop on a motorcycle and take a virtual ride with Jacob Black and a pack of wolves on a dirt-bike adventure through the moonlit woods while an evil creature roams the area looking for blood.

Guests will control their bike's speed, which path it takes and see other riders during the excursion.

Twilight Saga: Bella's Journey will be an indoor amusement ride that highlights key moments from the films including Bella Swan's relationship with her vampire husband Edward Cullen and encountering The Volturi, the most powerful coven of vampires.

■ **Soaring with the "Gods of Egypt."** Gods of Egypt: Battle for Eternity will be a virtual reality roller coaster based on the 2016 film about Egyptian deities. Riders on the high-speed amusement train ride will don headsets and soar through ancient Egypt during an epic battle between good and evil.

■ **Plotting an "Escape Plan."** About 20 people work together to break out of a maximum-security prison in Escape Plan: Prison Break. The group faces a climbing challenge course and crawl through tunnels to escape to freedom.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Students accused of tainting teachers' food

OH POWELL — Authorities are investigating accusations that students at an Ohio middle school put bodily fluids into food that was then served to teachers.

A Delaware County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman said that office is investigating reports of students putting urine and semen into crepes eaten by teachers at Hyatts Middle School in Powell.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Tracy Whitely said any students found to have put fluids in the food could face felony assault charges.

Graduate repays cost of prank 25 years later

VT MONTPELIER — A high school prankster who damaged school property in Vermont is finally paying the price — and then some — just in time for his 25th reunion.

As a Montpelier High School senior, Michael Burzycki created a 60-by-16-foot banner that read "LIVE LONG AND PROSPER CLASS OF 1994." He and a classmate hung it outside the auditorium. But water bottles they used to weigh down the corners ended up breaking a window.

Principal Peter Clarke didn't punish him. Instead he handed him a bill for \$1,994, due at Burzycki's 25th reunion.

Burzycki told WPTZ-TV that he has the money but wanted to do more, so he started a GoFundMe page for the school that has raised more than \$5,000.

Man gets prison for smuggling immigrants

TX CORPUS CHRISTI — A Houston-area man must serve nearly two years in prison for trying to smuggle immigrants in furniture after three people were found in a plastic-wrapped dresser that was nailed shut.

Federal prosecutors said Yabar Ayan Portes-Arevalo, 23, of Katy, was sentenced to 21 months.

Investigators said Portes-Arevalo in December was driving a pickup truck and hauling a plastic-wrapped couch and dresser. He stopped at the Border Patrol checkpoint near Sarita.

Authorities said the driver appeared nervous so the load was examined. Agents removed the plastic and found three people hidden inside the couch and three more inside the dresser.

Bear whose life was spared returns home

NH CONCORD — A bear whose life was spared two years ago by the governor of New Hampshire has returned to her home turf after traveling thousands of miles since being released.

The state's Fish and Game Department had decided to euthanize the black bear and three of her young offspring in 2017 after repeated problems culminated with two bears entering a home near Dartmouth College. But

THE CENSUS

\$700

The amount a Forest Grove, Ore., man stole from his daughter's Girl Scout cookie money to pay for an erotic massage. He then staged a home invasion to cover up the theft. The Oregonian/OregonLive reported Brian Couture was sentenced to 18 months of probation, 80 hours of community service and restitution as part of a plea deal. Couture initially told authorities someone had broken into his home, assaulted him, damaged his laptop and stole the cookie money. When investigators found inconsistencies in his story, Couture eventually said he stole the money to pay for the massage and then faked the robbery.



JAY JANNER, AUSTIN (TEXAS) AMERICAN-STATESMAN/AP

A howling good time

Austin, Texas, Police K-9 Raggio, a 10-year-old Labrador retriever, howls after Austin Police Chief Brian Manley, left, recognized him and his handler, Officer Clint Hamilton, at a retirement party for three Austin police dogs at the Junior League of Austin, on Monday. Raggio and his fellow K-9s, Emma and Horgan, were honored by the chief, several officers and their families at the ceremony. Raggio was a drug dog who had more than 600 deployments in his seven years of service with the Austin Police Department.

Republican Gov. Chris Sununu ordered the animals relocated instead.

Only the yearlings were moved that year, however, because the mother bear left town to mate. She was fitted with a tracking collar and moved north last June, but made it back to Hanover last week.

State officials said she's not causing any trouble and there are no plans to move her again.

Great white shark detected off coast

CT GREENWICH — An organization that electronically tracks ocean life detected a nearly 10-foot long great white shark in Long Island Sound.

OCEARCH said it got a ping from the shark they dubbed Cabot off the coast of Greenwich.

Chris Fischer, OCEARCH's founding chairman and expedition leader, said the 500-pound-plus shark was tagged last year off Nova Scotia and has traveled

as far south as Florida.

Fischer said it's not unheard of for great whites to be in the sound, but "We were quite surprised to see this one so far to the west." He said the shark is probably after bait fish.

Work underway on sunk WWII British tanker

NY SOUTHAMPTON — The U.S. Coast Guard said work is underway to extract oil from a British tanker sunk by a German U-boat off Long Island during World War II.

The Coast Guard said in a news release that a team has been at the site of the tanker, named Coimbra, since April 29 and has pumped more than 62,000 gallons of oil from its tanks since May 11. Initial dive operations found the tanker was leaking small amounts of oil.

The Coimbra was torpedoed in January 1942, killing 36 officers and crew members about 30 miles off Long Island's south shore.

It's now about 180 feet deep.

State beaches, parks to offer free sunscreen

RI PROVIDENCE — Rhode Island is doing its part to wipe out skin cancer caused by overexposure to the sun.

Gov. Gina Raimondo and U.S. Sen. Jack Reed announced that the state is teaming up with sunscreen company Raw Elements USA to offer free sunscreen dispenser stations at all state-run beaches and several parks for the 2019 summer season.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S.

Man fleeing police hurt in roof jump

PA PITTSBURGH — Authorities said a man fleeing Pittsburgh police seriously injured himself when he jumped from the roof of a two-story home.

The officers were on patrol Sunday when they spotted a man they knew was wanted on war-

rants. They chased after him on foot, but he ran into a home and hid, even eluding a search by a police dog.

Officers eventually spotted him lying on the roof. After defying instructions to stay put, the man jumped onto one neighboring roof and then another before injuring himself when he jumped two stories to an alley below.

African painted dog killed by gate at zoo

FL MIAMI — Officials at a Florida zoo said a young African painted dog was killed when a gate collapsed on her.

Zoo Miami posted on Facebook that the juvenile female died Monday. She was one of five puppies born at the zoo in January.

Zoo officials said the endangered canines were being moved between enclosures in a routine transfer when a cable that supported a solid metal guillotine door separated, allowing the door to fall on the animal.

From wire reports

FACES

Keanu Reeves is having a KEANUSSANCE with the John Wick series — but did he ever really go anywhere?

By TRAVIS M. ANDREWS
The Washington Post

Alh, the comeback. Hollywood blogs and gossip rags are filled with stories of actors making these supposed things. Everyone from Matthew McConaughey to Tom Cruise to Robert Downey Jr. has had their late-stage careers described by some modified version of the word “renaissance.” There’s a slight difference with Keanu Reeves.

McConaughey graduated from breezy rom-coms to gritty character acting in “Mud,” “Killer Joe” and “True Detective.” Cruise overcame his unflattering public persona as an ardent Scientologist to earn the reputation of the hardest-working man in Hollywood, pushing himself to the limit to be our premier action star. Downey walked the path of sobriety and kick-started the biggest film franchise in Hollywood history: the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Reeves continued doing the things at which he has always excelled. There was no big controversy. No tarring and feathering by an outraged internet mob. No public descent into addiction. Just a string of forgettable movies that slowly faded his star. Until now.

The reason? John Wick. Last weekend, Reeves’ latest film, “John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum,” debuted at No. 1 at the box office. The third installment in the hard-R, kung fu-inspired action series, in which he plays the titular character, began in 2014 and made the once-beloved actor relevant — and lucrative again. “Parabellum” pulled in \$57 million in its first few days.

Reeves, 54, nabbed his breakout role in 1986’s disturbing “River’s Edge,” which is about a group of teenagers dealing with the aftermath of their friend killing his girlfriend. His performance led to a series of hits, cracking open the gates of stardom. Soon, Reeves was starring in many of the most popular films of the late 1980s and early 1990s, spanning genres from comedy (“Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure” and “Parenthood”) to drama (“My Own Private Idaho” and “Dangerous Liaisons”) to action (“Point Break”).

By the time he became the face of “Speed” with Sandra Bullock in 1994, Reeves was a bona fide star and an unstoppable force in Hollywood. His stardom achieved supernova in 1999 with the beginning of “The Matrix” trilogy. The idea of him ever needing a “Keanuissance” had seemed insane.

However, things started to change. He played in a series of forgettable indie movies (“Thumbsucker” and “Ellie Parker”), some well-received ones (“A Scanner Darkly”), some silly ones (the much-maligned “The Lake House”) and a few big swings that mostly missed (“Constantine”).

Then came the internet. Stills of Reeves’ films — and even candid shots of him — were turned into memes. While the sudden “memefication” of everything, particularly all things Hollywood, proved to be a particular boon to some actors (they helped distill Jeff Goldblum’s quirkiness in a way that delighted fans, for example), memes about Reeves often positioned him at least partially as the butt of the joke. His facial expressions, which generally run the gamut between bewildered and stoic, were played for laughs.

There was a still of a shocked Reeves from “Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure” that became known as Conspiracy

Keanu. It was usually accompanied by text exploring fake conspiracies so ridiculous that they’re funny. One reads, “What if the CIA invented dinosaurs to discourage time travel?”

Another, called Sad Keanu, came from a paparazzi shot of a sorrowful-looking Reeves sitting on a bench, eating a sandwich. People often Photoshopped him out of the shot and into other absurd situations, such as sitting on the edge of a cliff or on the McDonald’s golden arches.

The result was that the largely out-of-sight actor was supplanted by the meme in the cultural consciousness.

The memes didn’t really bother Reeves personally, although they might have changed how a younger generation viewed him. But the John Wick series transformed him into an action star again.

The franchise is predicated on a simple but absurd story. It follows Wick, the world’s best assassin in a universe full of them; they operate out of a global chain of hotels called “The Continental.” The first film opens with Wick in retirement, having finally gotten out to marry a woman with whom he fell in love. But now he’s a widower, and he receives one last parting gift: a puppy. Not long after receiving the furball, though, a Russian mobster kills the dog in a petty act of insolence, forcing the principled Wick out of retirement. After that — and for three movies now — he kills everyone who tries to do him in (which is a lot of people!) with anything at his disposal, from guns and swords to pencils, books and his bare hands. The result is pure, beautiful, balletic action.

Now Reeves’ late-night press tour appearances, rather than memes of him sadly eating a sandwich, are going viral. A clip of Reeves stunning Stephen Colbert and his audience on “The Late Show” this month became social media’s topic of the week.

After a generally humorous conversation about the actor’s new action thriller, Colbert asked his long-haired guest, “What do you think happens when we die, Keanu Reeves?” The question, clearly meant to be a setup for a clever quip, saw Reeves lean back, take a deep breath and think as a somber look spread across his face.

“I know that the ones who love us will miss us,” he finally responded, silencing the host, who smiled in appreciation. Reeves’ thoughtful answer was clipped and passed around the internet for days after as fans watched the sweet moment in preparation for his ultraviolent movie.

If we had to bet, there are likely many more sweet moments to come, as we’re not done with that bloody world just yet. The third John Wick film sets up a clear cliffhanger that begs for a fourth, and its expanded universe will spread to TV with the upcoming Starz series “The Continental.”

All of which is to say: Keanu Reeves is back, baby. But then again, he never really went anywhere.



George R.R. Martin

Martin: ‘GOT’ finale was ending, beginning

What’s next for “Game of Thrones?”

George R.R. Martin, whose work was adapted into the HBO series, says it’s “been a wild ride.” Martin wrote on his blog Monday that it “was an ending, but it was also a beginning.”

Martin, 70, said he’s working on the next installment, “The Winds of Winter.” He said he knows it’s late “but it will be done.” He’s just not saying when, Martin said “A Dream of Spring” will follow.

Martin said he hears people asking whether it will have the same ending as the show, or will it be different.

Martin writes: “Well. Yes. And no.” He says he’ll write it, people can read it and then everyone can “argue about it on the internet.”

‘Big Bang Theory’ finale wins weekly live ratings

In its last blast, “The Big Bang Theory” topped the TV ratings by a light-year.

The back-to-back, two-episode finale of the nerdy CBS comedy’s 12-season run drew 18.5 million live viewers Thursday night to easily win the week, the Nielsen company said Tuesday.

Sunday night’s much-ballyhooed finale of HBO’s “Game of Thrones” was a distant second with 13.6 million live viewers.

“Game of Thrones” had 18.4 million viewers when same-night reruns and streaming services were included, making it the most-watched episode of any kind in the history of the cable channel.

Other news

■ A grand jury indicted a 29-year-old man in the fatal shooting of rapper Nipsey Hussle in Los Angeles. Eric Ronald Holder Jr. was indicted on one count of murder, two counts each of attempted murder and assault with a firearm, and one count of possession of a firearm by a felon. He could get life in prison if convicted. Holder pleaded not guilty to the charges Tuesday.

■ A judge delayed sentencing for former “The Bachelor” star Chris Soules for leaving the scene of a fatal 2017 accident. The decision comes after Judge Andrea Dwyer ruled Tuesday that she will disregard letters from the deceased driver’s relatives. Dwyer said the wife and sons of Iowa farmer Kenneth Mosher aren’t victims under state law because Soules was not convicted of causing Mosher’s death. Soules pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor for leaving after rear-ending Mosher’s slow-moving tractor.

From The Associated Press

ILLUSTRATION, BASED ON LIONSGATE PHOTO, BY SEAN MOORES/Stars and Stripes

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Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher
Lt. Col. Sean Klinek, Europe commander
Lt. Col. Richard McClintic, Pacific commander

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stripes.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stripes.com
Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com
Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.com
Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erk Stavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
stavin.erk@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350, DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81-42.552.2511 ext. 88380, DSN (315)277.380

Washington

Joseph Cacholi, Washington Bureau Chief
cacholi.joseph@stripes.com
+1(202)886-0033
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert W. Reisman, Mideast Circulation Manager
robert.w.reisman.naf@gmail.com
xsscirculation@stripes.com
DSN (314)583-9111

Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stripes.com
memberservices@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090, DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com
+81-3 6985.3171, DSN (315)229.3171

CONTACT US

Washington

633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050
tel: (+1) 202.886.0003

Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts

stripes.com/contactus

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OPINION

Is America preparing for the wrong war?

By EVAN THOMAS
Special to The Washington Post

I am a child of the Cold War; I remember the duck-and-cover drills and the look on my father's face during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. However scary terrorism might be, it is nothing compared to nuclear holocaust.

So I had an alarming, back-to-the-future sensation reading an article titled "How to Win America's Next War" in the spring issue of Foreign Policy magazine. The article was written by Elbridge Colby, who was the lead Pentagon official in developing the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Its predecessor, the Quadrennial Defense Review, usually read like "More of the Same," but this one is different, in part because it bears the direct hand and support of Jim Mattis, the former defense secretary, as well as his deputy (and now secretary nominee) Pat Shanahan, who overrode the status quo bureaucracy.

The gist of the Pentagon's strategic review is that the military needs to shift its primary focus away from fighting terrorists and rogue states to prepare to fight Russia and China. Colby's argument in Foreign Policy is not quite Winston Churchill's 1938 book, "While England Slept." Still, it is an argument for waking up.

Russia and China, again? Russia has increasingly played the role of malevolent spoiler, trying to disrupt democratic elections with trolls and bots. Meanwhile, China has been looking less and less like a global trading partner and more and more like a high-tech hegemon bent on domination by taking over global networks. Both nations (and the United States, for that matter) are turning the internet into a cyberconflict zone. But, until I read Colby's

article, I had not realized the degree to which both Russia and China have revitalized and reshaped their militaries to threaten the Pax Americana that has guaranteed global free trade and the spread of democracy since World War II.

With the end of the Cold War, America became — for a time — the planet's dominant military power. Under the old model, the United States could use its far-flung bases and control of the air to strike back. In the conflicts in the Balkans and Operation Desert Storm in the 1990s, we launched overwhelming air campaigns only after, as Colby says, we were "good and ready." But in recent years, while we were grinding away at small wars without end in Afghanistan and Iraq, Russia and China were building weapons systems that could quickly wipe out our forward bases and make the cost of counterattacking in, say, Taiwan, prohibitively high. (For instance, the Chinese have our naval and air facilities on Guam targeted with dozens, if not hundreds, of missiles, up from zero in 2003.) Both China and Russia already have, or in China's case, soon will have, the capacity to create a fait accompli. By making it too costly for the United States to "take back" Taiwan or Estonia, our rivals can go on to intimidate and coerce our allies in places such as Japan, the Philippines or Poland.

Churchill supposedly liked to say America could be counted on to do the right thing after trying all the alternatives. The United States arrived late, but ultimately just in time, in World War I and World War II. But the reality of modern warfare, with longer-range missiles and cyberattacks, means that America needs to be able to fight Russian or Chinese aggression right away — to at least blunt their attacks and

raise the cost. The risk of doing otherwise is especially stark when facing a nuclear power. There would have been no D-Day to liberate Europe if Adolf Hitler had possessed nukes.

Despite its headline — "How to Win America's Next War" — Colby's article offers few suggestions on precisely how to blunt a Chinese or Russian attack. Still, alarmist headlines aside, the point is not to engage in a war but to avoid one. The old truism — that the best way to avoid war is to be prepared to fight one — has a special and specific meaning in the scenarios envisioned by the Pentagon's strategic review. The only condition under which the United States would actually fight is if China or Russia seized territory, invading the Baltics or Taiwan, for example. The Pentagon officials who wrote the National Defense Strategy are not arguing for a preemptive strike (the sort of war reportedly envisioned from time to time by President Donald Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, against North Korea or Iran). If China and Russia stay on their side of the line, they have nothing to worry about.

Preparedness for a conventional war against China and Russia actually means an all-out nuclear war less likely. The autocrats who run Russia and China are opportunistic and increasingly aggressive. By tempting them, through our own inattention or complacency, to seize territory, we risk creating exactly the sort of conditions that can spin out of control into a greater conflagration. Sometimes the best way to achieve stability is to back assertion with strength, to draw a line in the sand and mean it.

Evan Thomas is the author of "like's Bluff" and "First: Sandra Day O'Connor."

Trump's timid, disappointing immigration plan

By KARL W. SMITH
Bloomberg News

Three months ago, President Donald Trump declared his love for legal immigration and said he wanted people coming to the U.S. "in the largest numbers ever." Last week the administration revealed exactly what he meant by that — and it is disappointing, to say the least.

Trump's February promise may have sounded odd to those who see him as hostile to immigration. But there are at least two camps in Trump world.

One, call it the California contingent, believes that "our country is full," as the president himself said an event in California last month. Its members basically want a big sign on the border that says, "No Vacancies."

The other group, call it the New York contingent — one of its leading proponents is former Manhattan resident Jared Kushner, the president's adviser and son-in-law — sees immigration as a source of growth, but wants that growth concentrated in the high-skilled areas of the economy. More nurses and fewer nannies, in other words. The sign they want on the border says, "Expert Help."

There are two ways to settle the differences between factions. One is to focus only on their point of agreement: that there are too many low-skilled immigrants. This has essentially been the administration's policy since California-contingent adviser Steve Bannon's departure in August 2017.

It's hard to claim it has worked. By targeting many poor and vulnerable immigrants, the policy further alienates moderates and

progressives. And because it has failed to stem the inflow of undocumented immigrants, it fuels populist and conservative frustration with the president.

So it would seem the time is ripe for the second approach: the elusive grand bargain. Give both contingents some of what they want and force them to accept some of what they don't. Allow more immigration than the California contingent would prefer, but not as much as the New York contingent would like. Crack down on undocumented workers — but through their employers. Enforce existing laws. If President Richard Nixon could go to China, was the thinking last week, then Trump can strike a grand bargain on immigration.

That's not what happened. The policy unveiled last week would shift the preferences for legal immigration away from family and diversity and toward merit, but leave the overall level the same. It does not address the fate of the 8 million, or 80,000 or so young people brought to the U.S. illegally when they were children, or the rest of the undocumented population. It is silent on expansion of the E-Verify system that hardliners (correctly) say discourages illegal immigration by making it more difficult for employers to hire undocumented workers.

Far better one innovation, a permanent fund for border security, is a silly maneuver that overemphasizes current politics. Democrats have long been willing to fund border security — and would be now if it weren't for the administration's harsh rhetoric about immigrants and immigration policy.

Far better would have been to adopt a comprehensive plan that radically in-

creased the amount of merit-based immigration and fully implemented the E-Verify system. That second step would also bring into sharp relief the question of what to do about the undocumented population, estimated to be about 10.7 million in 2016.

There are a number of solutions to that problem. One, proposed by so-called "reformicon" Reihan Salam, would give amnesty to the current undocumented population but end family-sponsored immigration. Such a move would encourage the assimilation of the undocumented population. Another would be to combine the concept of Heartland visas with deferred enforcement and a path to legalization. Such a plan would allow undocumented residents who don't qualify for the Dream Act to receive a similar deal if they got a job in declining communities.

Any such path to legalization should also require that undocumented immigrants learn English. Progressives often overestimate the role of race, and underestimate the role of language, in fueling working-class opposition to immigration.

I realize that proposals such as these would be subject to intense criticism from all sides. If anyone can weather such criticism, however, it's Trump; above all else, I suspect, his base just wants some progress. When he announced his intentions three months ago to offer what sounded like a compromise proposal on immigration, I implored Democrats to be open to it. I now beg the president to have the guts to make one.

Karl W. Smith is a former assistant professor of economics at the University of North Carolina's school of government and founder of the blog Modeled Behavior.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Delay of Huawei ban gives tech time to adapt



No Han Guan/AP

A child plays with bubbles near the logo for tech giant Huawei in Beijing on Monday. The delay on some of the Trump administration's sanctions against Huawei gives U.S. tech companies time to adjust.

By JOE McDONALD
AND FRANK BAJAK
Associated Press

The United States is delaying some restrictions on U.S. technology sales to Chinese tech powerhouse Huawei in what it calls an effort to ease the blow on Huawei smartphone owners and smaller U.S. telecommunications providers that rely on its networking equipment.

The Trump administration insists the sanctions are unrelated to its escalating trade war with China, and many analysts see it as aimed at pressuring U.S. allies in Europe to accede to Washington's entreaties to exclude Huawei equipment from their next-generation wireless networks, known as 5G.

The U.S. government on Monday amended last week's order

restricting all technology sales to Huawei, the world's biggest maker of mobile network gear and the No. 2 smartphone brand. It granted a temporary, 90-day exemption, but only for existing hardware and software.

Shares in tech companies rose Tuesday after some news organizations erroneously reported that the amended order amounted to a blanket reprieve for Huawei.

"It's just housekeeping. It's not a capitulation. It's a very pragmatic solution to avoid unintended consequences to third parties," said Kevin Wolf, who oversaw a related case involving China's No. 2 telecoms supplier ZTE as assistant secretary of commerce for export administration under President Barack Obama.

The U.S. claims Huawei is a cybersecurity risk and has targeted

it against the backdrop of a wider battle with China over economic and technological preeminence that has included tariffs on billions worth of trade and limits on business. U.S. officials say Huawei is legally beholden to China's repressive rulers but have provided no evidence that it has intentionally allowed its equipment to be used for espionage.

Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei said Tuesday that the company has "supply backups" if it loses access to American components.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (May 23)	\$1.1456
Dollar buys (May 23)	69.8779
British pound (May 23)	\$1.30
Japanese yen (May 23)	\$3.90
South Korean won (May 23)	1,164.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2635
Canada (Dollar)	1.3385
China (Yuan)	6.9051
Denmark (Krone)	6.6899
Egypt (Pound)	16.9397
Euro	\$1.1163/0.8958
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8499
Hungary (Forint)	52.46
Israel (Shekel)	3.6113
Japan (Yen)	110.36
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3045
Norway (Krone)	8.7392
Philippines (Peso)	52.46
Poland (Zloty)	3.86
Saudi (Riyal)	3.7507
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3788
South Korea (Won)	1,190.38
Switzerland (Franc)	1.0087
Thailand (Baht)	31.95
Turkey (Lira)	6.0918
(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.00
Federal funds market rate	2.92
3-month bill	2.32
30-year bond	2.84

Tesla trims prices on cars amid stock slump

Associated Press

DETROIT — Tesla has reduced the prices of its two most expensive models, raising concerns about fading interest in its cars and whether the company can generate enough cash to pay all the bills.

On Monday, Tesla cut \$3,000 from the price of the Model S sedan and \$2,000 from the Model X SUV.

The company said in a statement that it periodically adjusts prices and available options like other car companies. The decreases offset price increases from a month ago when Tesla offered longer battery range and added a new drive system and

suspension. The statement didn't say if slowing sales influenced the decision.

The moves come as Tesla's stock is under pressure from investors who are becoming skeptical of CEO Elon Musk's ability to turn a profit and keep the business growing, all while balancing demands of developing a self-driving ride system and building new products such as a small SUV, a pickup truck, a new roadster and an electric semi.

"The business fundamentals of Tesla always have been shaky, but the stock price has been buoyed by the story that this is a company that was going to do huge things," said Navigant Research

analyst Sam Abelsamid. "What we've seen in the last month or so is people are starting to recognize maybe that wasn't really true."

The Palo Alto, Calif., company, which had been growing sales until this year, has run into trouble while trying to make the transition from a niche producer of luxury electric vehicles to a mass-market automaker. In order to control costs to bring down the price of its less-expensive Model 3, it's been forced to go through two rounds of layoffs and close some of its stores.

Musk told employees that expenses are being reviewed since the company went on a "Spartan diet" after losing \$702.1 million

in the first quarter. All of this came after Tesla had difficulties producing the Model 3.

Tesla shares closed Tuesday down slightly at \$205.08.

MARKET WATCH

May 21, 2019

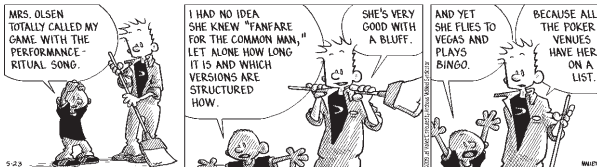
Dow Jones Industrials	197.43
	25,877.33
Nasdaq composite	83.35
	7,785.72
Standard & Poor's 500	24.13
	2,864.36
Russell 2000	20.29
	1,545.25

WEATHER OUTLOOK



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



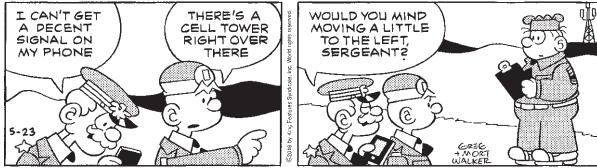
Candorville



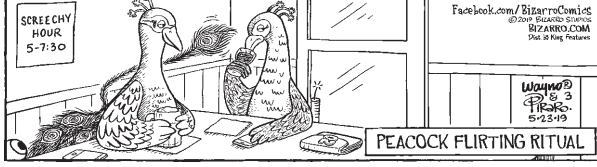
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12					13				14				
15					16				17				
18					19		20	21					
			22				23				24	25	
26	27	28				29				30			
31					32				33				
34				35				36					
37				38				39					
			40					41			42	43	44
45	46					47	48		49				
50						51				52			
53						54				55			

ACROSS

- Cuts off
- Cookout, briefly
- Gridlock sound
- Jacob's brother
- Actress Lucy
- In — land
- Goatee's spot
- Here (Fr.)
- Saharan
- Submit
- Give temporarily
- Blue blood
- Tour vehicles
- Toe count
- Actress Hagen
- Sciences' partner
- Auction signal
- Urban haze
- Vitamin stat
- Architect I.M. —
- Stinging insects
- Administrative worker
- Lean to one side
- Redacted
- Poker variety
- Victor
- Art Deco master
- Carton sealer
- Texas tea
- Albacore, e.g.
- Cold War initials

- '60s war zone
- Once around the sun

DOWN

- Nobelista Walesa
- Job-safety org.
- Ache
- Ice cream parlor orders
- Russian pancakes
- Pen name
- Took part in a bee
- Mel of many voices
- Hearing aids?
- Inventor Whitney
- Knee protector
- 191040 org.
- Many millennia
- Unemotional
- Perched on
- Labels
- Biting remark
- Pakistani language
- New companies
- Uncharged particle
- Full feeling
- Crony
- Bankroll
- Duck down
- Kingdom
- Loyal
- Sicilian spouter
- Beloved
- R-V link
- Prof's helpers
- Spy org.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

		M	O	C		C	O	D					
		R	E	M	O		S	A	D	A	T		
T	U	L	I	P		A	R	O	M	A	S		
S	I	T	T	I	N	G	P	R	E	T	Y		
A	N	S		L	O	G	E	S		E	A	R	
			P	O	N	Y			A	R	C	S	
		S	P	A	T	E			N	E	W	S	Y
P	A	I	D		S	A	V	E					
D	R	E		M	A	U	V	E		B	A		
F	I	T	T	I	N	G							
S	I	E	N	N	A				I	R	E	N	E
	N	A	D	E	R				N	E	R	O	
		S	S						G	I	S		

5-23

CRYPTOQUIP

IFJFM KDW BEDTJ KDW T
ODMJK PTDO IDTU CMBRCJ V
PDDEJR YVBJ, C TJXUDM

KDW'R FVYJ WTMJR CMXDOJ.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THAT COMPANY WILL DELIVER WOOD OR STONE FRAGMENTS VERY FAST. THEY EVEN DO OVERNIGHT CHIPPING.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals M


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INDIANAPOLIS 500



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Brazil's Helio Castroneves sits in his car under an umbrella during practice last week for the Indianapolis 500. Castroneves is going for his fourth Indy 500 victory at 43 years old after winning in 2001 and 2002, then again in 2009.

Eyes on the prize

Castroneves chases record-tying fourth win

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — When Helio Castroneves left Indianapolis last May, he pleaded with Roger Penske for one more chance at a record-tying fourth Indianapolis 500 win.

Now that Castroneves is back in town and Penske has assured the exuberant Brazilian racer of making at least two more Indy starts, Castroneves has adjusted his goal.

"I want to win (this year) because winning gives me an opportunity to go for five next year and I know I'm capable of it," he said. "Racing is still my passion, racing is still my love and hopefully I can break the record."

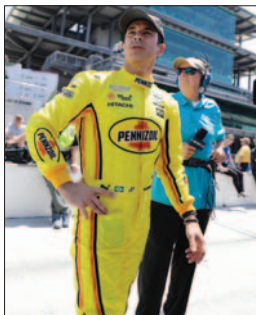
While time may be running short on Castroneves' quest, he certainly knows his way around the historic Brickyard. And he has a lot going for him.

Al Unser won his fourth and final 500 in 1987, becoming the oldest winner in race history five days short of his 48th birthday.

Castroneves is 43 and works for the winningest team in 500 history, a team that owns four straight wins at Indianapolis Motor Speedway — last year's 500 and Brickyard 400 on the historic oval and the 2018 and 2019 IndyCar Grand Prix on the track's road course.

Castroneves' mastery of Indy has turned him into a perennial race-day favorite.

"He knows when to take risks and when not to," four-time Indy winner and driving coach Rick Mears said. "But he also works hard and he cleans up the small things



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Helio Castroneves will be back next year to try for another Indy 500 victory, according to team owner Roger Penske.

around here that make a big difference. He's really open-minded about all that but he also drives very smooth, which is another plus."

The résumé proves it.

Castroneves won his first two Indy races in 2001 and 2002, making him the first driver since Unser in 1970-71 with back-to-back victories.

He finished second to teammate Gil de Ferran in 2002 after capturing the first of

his four pole wins. Only Mears (six) has captured more poles.

Castroneves also won in 2009, finished second in 2014 and 2017 and has eight top-five finishes and 14 top-10s in 18 career starts.

Castroneves will start 12th in this year's race after qualifying with a speed of 228.523 mph.

It's a solid start to Castroneves' latest attempt to join Mears, Unser and A.J. Foyt in the four-time winners club.

"Hey, it's the 10th anniversary of No. 3," Penske President Tim Cindric joked Wednesday, drawing laughter from Mears and Penske before explaining why Castroneves has been so good for so long on the series' trickiest track. "The risk-reward ratio here is definitely the highest, and he never holds anything back. But he's also a student of the sport and keeps finding little things to work on with these cars and the details that really matter."

That's one reason Penske continues to bet on Castroneves each May.

A year ago, after moving from the IndyCar Series to sports cars full time, Castroneves finished fifth in his season debut at the Grand Prix and then wound up crashing in the 500. He finished a career-worst 27th. Afterward, Castroneves used a television interview to plead for one more chance.

There won't be a repeat May 26. On Wednesday, Penske told The Associated Press he expects Castroneves to return in his familiar No. 3 car next year — win or lose. And it may not be his last chance, either.

Rossi won't talk about his future

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Alexander Rossi's long month at home in Indianapolis got off to a rough start when a thief snatched a package off his front porch.

If he has his way, it will be the only hiccup in his push for a second Indianapolis 500 victory.

"The desire to win again is pretty strong," said Rossi. "So it's not hard to come back and want to do it again."

Rossi was the surprise winner in 2016 as a rookie in the 100th running of the historic race and the victory cemented him as one of IndyCar's budding stars. The California native

wasn't well known in the United States and had spent most of his career chasing a seat in Formula One.

But that Indy 500 victory instantly made him a top contender in the series. Three full seasons later, Rossi has six career victories and finished second in the championship race last year to Scott Dixon.

He turns 28 at the end of this season, a contract year for Rossi at Andretti Autosport amid speculation about his future. Rossi ran the Rolex 24 at Daytona with Team Penske, which could have an opening next season if it doesn't keep Simon Pagenaud. Rossi is not interested in discussing speculation as he prepares for the May 26 race.

"Your guess is as good as mine, to be honest," Rossi told The Associated Press when asked about his 2020 plans.

"We're just trying to get through this month and get through the year. I feel like any conversations and things about the future are pretty irrelevant and very distracting for the goal of what we're trying to accomplish," he said. "That's to win a championship and to try and get some redemption on what we felt we kind of gave away last year. So that's our main focus, my main priority, and I hope that everyone else in the organization is the same way."

Rossi has had an uneventful week of practice and worked through his checklist so quickly Wednesday he was able to watch the afternoon session in street clothes atop teammate Marco Andretti's pit stand. Andretti is a five-car team at Indy and Rossi said it gives the organization the luxury to "divide and conquer" all the data. "It's an open book, so we share everything, good, bad, indifferent, during the day, and especially the evening. We'll have a big, round-table discussion," Rossi said. "It's one of the things that really surprised me the first time that I really came here and was driving for Andretti, kind of the way they do that."

Rossi's only complaint so far in May is that someone brazenly stole that package, a theft caught on his doorbell camera. He posted the footage on social media and contacted Amazon, which he praised for immediately sending him a replacement.

The robbery will go unsolved because he didn't file a police report.

"Apparently, the police don't investigate things unless you file a report," Rossi said.

'We're just trying to get through this month and get through the year.'

Alexander Rossi

2016 Indy 500 winner on his future with Andretti Autosports

HIGH SCHOOL

All-Italy final in D-II boys

By GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

REICHENBACH-STEEGEN, Germany — A pair of gritty, low-scoring DODEA Europe Division II boys soccer semifinals Wednesday set up what figures to be a similar matchup for the championship.

Top-seeded American Overseas School of Rome outlasted defending champion AFNORTH 1-0 and will take on fourth-seeded Aviano, which beat upstart Florence by the same 1-0 margin.

AOSR and Aviano played to a 1-1 draw in their pool-play meeting on Monday, suggesting an evenly matched title game to come Thursday at Kaiserslautern High School. AOSR beat Aviano 4-0 in their regular-season meeting on March 22, though the Saints were without several key players for that early-season match.

The Falcons lived up to their No. 1 billing by ousting the defending champion Lions.

Aldo Di Biase scored a first-half goal that held up. A number of other Falcons opportunities sailed off-target or were batted away by Lions keeper Paul Kohl, preserving AFNORTH hopes for a late equalizer. But AOSR's defense focused on AFNORTH star James Barata and kept the Lions off the board.

"They did a great job of keying him and neutralizing him," AFNORTH coach Mike Miano said of Barata. "They played great defense against a really talented offensive player."

Di Biase was thrilled to deliver the one goal needed to advance.

"It had to come sooner or later," Di Biase said. "We should have scored a few goals, but it's what it is. We played well as a team, that's all that matters."

AFNORTH had seven players back from last year's championship game and eyed a repeat. But the Lions struggled to gear up again after a month-long gap in their regular-season schedule, Miano said, and they weren't able to develop enough complementary playmakers to take advantage of AOSR's preoccupation with Barata.

"I'm disappointed for them, but we'll rebuild next year and hopefully have a stronger showing," Miano said.

AOSR, meanwhile, is headed back to the title game for the second time in three seasons. The Falcons



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Florence's Carlo Marchi tries to keep Aviano's Cole Hinchcliff from the ball in a Division II semifinal on Wednesday. Aviano won the game 1-0 and will face AOSR in Thursday's final.

lost in OT in 2017 to Roman archrival Marymount; they plan to make things right Thursday.

"This is our year," Di Biase said.

The fourth-seeded Saints withstood a flurry of late free kicks, corner kicks and other Florence threats to advance.

"I was nervous, especially at the end," Aviano goalkeeper Giacomo Fabbro said. "But I had faith in my teammates, I just had to grab the ball and kick it up at the end."

That late stand converted the team's first-half goal into a game-winner. That score on a free kick 15 minutes in was provided by Logan Hinchcliff, who has scored all three of Aviano's goals this tournament.

"They set up their wall, I saw the open space," Hinchcliff said. "It was a simple bend to the back of the net."

The Saints have made a habit of high drama in this postseason. They played AOSR and Bahrain to 1-1 ties, surviving the three-team pool without a win. But Aviano picked a great time for its first victory of this postseason.

Senior leaders Hinchcliff and Fabbro had high hopes for this year's group, sensing potential the team has now made good on, with an even greater achievement still a possibility.

"We are incredibly excited. We said this is going to be our year," Hinchcliff said. "We lived up to the hype. We're so proud of the boys."

sion III final against Ansbach.

The Jaguars went 5-1 in the first three games of the tournament, which featured the seven entries all playing one another once. Sigonella's only loss was 1-0 to Hohenfels earlier on Wednesday.

Still, a loss to the Brigands could have kept the Jaguars out of the championship game.

Likewise, Ansbach needed a 4-0 victory over Spangdahlem in the day's final game to ensure its

spot in the final. Both teams entered the game with 4-1 records. Ansbach's lone loss was to Sigonella (3-1) on Tuesday.

Sigonella and Ansbach are set to take the field at Kaiserslautern Stadium at 11 a.m., following the girls contest between Spangdahlem and Hohenfels. Both of those teams clinched spots in the finals on Tuesday as round-robin play was more limited with only five teams participating.

Edgren's Atkinson sets hurdles mark

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Momomi Atkinson faced a tough choice entering the first day of the Far East track and field meet Wednesday: focus on her best event, the 300 hurdles, or try to score more team points for Edgren by also taking on the 400.

With the blessing of her coach, Tim Schwehr, Atkinson opted to only hurdle — and etched her name in the Pacific and Far East meet record books.

The senior clocked 46.17 seconds in the 300 hurdles preliminaries on Wednesday. That makes two straight years the Pacific record has been broken in the Far East meet. A year ago, Yokota's Britney Bailey ran the event in 46.38, but that was in the finals.

"I was a bit surprised," said Atkinson, adding that she was hoping just to reach 47 seconds. Her previous best was 48.27 a month ago in the final regular season meet.

"Just run my own race and not let the people around me affect me," said Atkinson of focusing on herself.

Schwehr said he believes Atkinson can do even better in Thursday's finals, adding that in the last couple of weeks, she's turned over a new leaf.

"She became completely motivated. It was really great to see her take it to heart," Schwehr said, adding he thinks Atkinson can run in the 45-second range. "I can't wait for tomorrow."

Atkinson was one of two Far East meet records to fall on Wednesday.

Kinnick's boys 3,200-meter relay team clocked a time of 8 minutes, 11.28 seconds that topped the five-year-old mark of 8:14.56 set by Zama.

"It always feels good to beat a record; it's part of the reason we're here, to push those limits," Red Devils coach Luke Voth said.

After one day of action, four-time defending D-I champion Kinnick held a slight edge over



Edgren senior Momomi Atkinson, in an image from a video, set a meet and Pacific record in the 300 hurdles on Wednesday.

Humphreys, 97.95%, in the team race. Yokota held the Division II lead, with 99 points. Perry was next with 67.

Figuroa's no-hitter paces Zama in softball

NAVAL AIR FACILITY ATSUGI, Japan — Having entered the Far East Division II softball tournament with a 7-12 record, Zama appeared to be a middle-of-the-pack team. But Litzie Figuroa had other ideas.

The senior right-hander fired a no-hitter in the first game Wednesday 3-0, beating Osan 12-5 and finishing the day with a 7-5 upset of DODEA Japan champion Yokota. Jessica Atkinson homered and Zama scored seven times in the third inning.

"It feels amazing," Figuroa said. "We're going to keep pushing harder until we get to the end."

It was not just a one-game wonder, either; the Trojans closed out Wednesday 3-0, beating Osan 12-5 and finishing the day with a 7-5 upset of DODEA Japan champion Yokota. Jessica Atkinson homered and Zama scored seven times in the third inning.

"They have the energy and the desire," coach Danny Davis said. "They just need to keep bringing it."

Sigonella, Ansbach meet for boys D-III title

Stars and Stripes

The Sigonella boys soccer team played six times during the regular season and didn't win once.

None of those contests, though, were against schools its size, so the Jaguars were a total unknown entering the season-ending tournament this week.

That's no longer the case, though, after Sigonella dispatched Brussels 5-0 on Wednesday to earn a spot in Thursday's Divi-

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MLB

Roundup

Kershaw extends streak

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.—The Los Angeles Dodgers just keep winning when Clayton Kershaw is on the mound.

Kershaw took a shutout into the seventh inning in his first start at Tropicana Field and the Los Dodgers beat the Tampa Bay Rays 7-3 on Tuesday night. The three-time NL Cy Young award winner (4-0) wound up allowing two runs, six hits, one walk and had eight strikeouts in 6¹/₃ innings.

"I thought all night long, just mixing his pitches, changing locations, sequencing, everything was great," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said.

Los Angeles has won 15 consecutive regular season games started by Kershaw. The left-hander is the only pitcher to have three separate streaks of 13 or more games (13 in 2014 and 16 in 2017) since 1920.

The Dodgers, with the National League's best record at 32-17, have won six of seven. Tampa Bay dropped two games behind the AL East-leading New York Yankees and are 13-13 since April 19th when it led the division by 5½ games.

The Rays were coming off a 13-5 loss Sunday to the Yankees. "We did so many things really well early on in the year," Rays manager Kevin Cash said. "Unfortunately the last two days, just ugly losses."

Kershaw had scattered four hits through six but was replaced by Pedro Baez with two on and one out in the seventh and Los Angeles up 6-0.

"Until that last inning everything went pretty well, not a whole lot of hard contact," Kershaw said.

Baez departed after facing one batter when Willy Adames had an RBI infield single that bruised the reliever's right knee. Baez needed assistance as he gingerly walked off the field.

X-rays were negative but manager Dave Roberts said Baez won't be available Wednesday.

"It was loud hitting the knee cap," Roberts said. "Since there's no fracture, we'll see how it responds tomorrow in treatment. We've got a couple days to assess where (he's) is at."

The Rays then got within 6-3 on a run-scoring single by Austin Meadows and Tommy Pham's RBI double off Scott Alexander.

"I don't know of any part of our game that we performed well," Cash said. "I know we got going there late, but it was late."

Yankees 11, Orioles 4: Clint Frazier homered twice and had a career-high five RBIs, Gary Sanchez contributed a three-run drive and New York routed host Baltimore.

Blue Jays 10, Red Sox 3:



CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Dodgers starting pitcher Clayton Kershaw delivers in the first inning Tuesday against the Rays in St. Petersburg, Fla. The Dodgers have won 15 consecutive regular season games when Kershaw starts.

Rowdy Tellez had two homers and five RBIs and Randal Grichuk also homered in host Toronto's win over Boston.

Marlins 5, Tigers 4 (11): Chad Wallach hit a tiebreaking double in the 11th inning, and Miami beat host Detroit.

Detroit forced extra innings by scoring two unearned runs off Miami closer Sergio Romo. The bottom of the ninth included an error, two replay reversals and the ejection of Tigers manager Ron Gardenhire.

Giants 4, Braves 3: Joe Panik hit a game-ending two-run single off Atlanta closer Luke Jackson with two outs in the ninth to lift host San Francisco.

Mets 6, Nationals 5: Pete Alonso hit a long tying homer in the eighth inning, Amed Rosario had a winning infield single with two outs in the ninth and host New York rallied from deficits three times to beat Washington.

Edwin Diaz (1-2) worked around a ninth-inning single for his first win with the Mets. Washington lost its third straight.

Rockies 5, Pirates 0: German Marquez struck out seven in eight dominant innings and Trevor Story hit his 11th home run as Colorado cooled off surging host Pittsburgh.

Marquez (5-2) gave up three hits, walked one and didn't allow a runner to third base as the Rockies snapped a four-game losing streak.

Athletics 5, Indians 3: Pinch-hitter Mark Canha's two-run homer off struggling Cleveland starter Trevor Bauer in the third inning sent visiting Oakland to its fifth straight win.

Reds 3, Brewers 0: Sonny Gray and three Cincinnati relievers held down host Milwaukee, which was missing Christian Yelich because of back spasms. It was the major league-leading

seventh shutout for the Reds as the Brewers were blanked for the first time this season.

Rangers 5, Mariners 3: Lance Lynn allowed two runs in seven innings and Shawn Kelley earned the save hours after learning that two lumps removed from his throat last week were benign as host Texas beat Seattle.

Padres 3, Diamondbacks 2: Eric Hosmer's two-run, opposite-field home run off Zack Greinke highlighted the three-run sixth inning that carried host San Diego past Arizona.

Greinke (6-2), who recorded his 2,500th career strikeout in the fourth, was working on a one-hit shutout when he ran into trouble in the sixth. Ian Kinsler singled with one out, advanced on Franmil Reyes' groundout and scored on Manny Machado's single. Hosmer then drove Greinke's next pitch to left field to give the Padres the lead.

Cubs 3, Phillies 2: Pinch-hitter Javier Baez's single capped a two-run, ninth-inning rally and host Chicago stopped Philadelphia's four-game winning streak.

Kris Bryant had three hits for the Cubs and scored two runs.

Phillies slugger Bryce Harper went 0-for-4, dropping his average to .224, and failed to reach base at Wrigley Field for the first time in 19 games. Jean Segura doubled in the first to extend his hitting streak to 12 games.

Twins 8, Angels 3: Marwin Gonzalez homered and drove in three runs as Minnesota rallied past host Los Angeles.

Gonzalez's two-run shot in the sixth tied the game at three. Minnesota then broke it open with three runs as Minnesota's Luke Bard (1-2), AL batting leader Jorge Polanco and Eddie Rosario each had two hits and drove in two runs for the Twins, who have won five of six on their road trip.

Verlander fans 12, flirts with no-no

By KRISTIE RIEKEN

Associated Press

HOUSTON — As Houston's Justin Verlander flirted with a no-hitter against the Chicago White Sox, he took a moment to scan the seats behind home plate to see whether childhood idol Nolan Ryan, who threw a record seven no-hitters, was watching from his usual seat behind the plate.

After throwing two no-hitters in his career, Verlander thought to himself that it would be "pretty cool" if Ryan was there to see it if he joined him in the exclusive group of players who have tossed at least three.

Ryan was at the game, but it wasn't to be.

"I screwed it up," Verlander said with a laugh.

Verlander took a no-hitter into the seventh inning and struck out a season-high 12 to lead the Astros to a 5-1 win over the White Sox.

Verlander (8-1), who said his slider was his best pitch Tuesday night, was in control from the first pitch, allowing one hit and walking one in eight innings for his fourth straight win and the seventh in eight starts. The only hit off him came when Jose Abreu sent the first pitch of his at-bat just over the wall and out of reach of a leaping Jake Marisnick in straightaway center field with one out in the seventh to cut the lead to 5-1.

"My thought was if Jake catches this, it's over. I'm going to get it," Verlander said. "Sure enough it went over. He had a great effort at it [but] I was pretty confident that that ball was going to be a home run unless a miracle happened."

It was Abreu's sixth career home run off of Verlander.

"We all know the kind of pitcher that he is," Abreu said in Spanish through a translator. "He has all of my respect. He's one of the best. In that at-bat I just went in there trying to make hard contact if possible. I am happy that I was able to do it."

Yuli Gurriel hit a solo homer off Dylan Covey (0-3) in the fourth inning to give the Astros home

runs in 18 straight games, tying the second-longest streak in franchise history.

Verlander, who threw no-hitters in 2007 and 2011, retired his first five batters with three strikeouts before walking Yonder Alonso with two outs in the second. But he got right back on track, sitting down Tim Anderson to end the inning.

He needed just 11 pitches to strike out the side in the third inning and fanned two in the fourth. He struck out one in the fifth and one more in the sixth after a long layoff after the Astros sent eight hitters to the plate in the bottom of their four-run fifth.

Yohan Ramirez struck out to start the seventh before Abreu's homer. Verlander received a hearty ovation after ending his night with a perfect eighth before Hector Rondon took over for the ninth and finished the no-hitter.

"He was all over the strike zone, wherever he wanted to go he could go," manager AJ Hinch said. "Everything from swing-and-miss to getting into counts and really one pitch the entire night where he yanked down to Abreu and Abreu hit a ball out of the ball park. An incredible night for a guy who's fun to watch pitch."

Houston, a big league-best 33-16, won for the 12th time in 13 games overall and ninth in a row over the White Sox.

Tuesday's performance was the latest in a string of dominant starts for the 36-year-old Verlander. He's allowed just two runs and four hits while striking out 29 combined in his last three starts spanning 22 innings.

Hinch was asked where his recent work ranks in his time in Houston. Verlander is in his second full season with the Astros after a trade from Detroit late in the 2017 season.

"He's been really good so I don't know if I can put it all together in a three-outing run but I'm just glad he's ours," Hinch said. "I'm glad every five days we've got him out there pitching at an elite level. When that happens we know we can win. Where that fits in with his Astro tenure so far, I have no idea."



ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH/AP

Astros starting pitcher Justin Verlander struck out a season-high 12 on Tuesday against the Chicago White Sox at Houston.

NHL PLAYOFFS

Bruins trying to remain sharp



GERRY BRONOME/AP

Bruins goalie Tuukka Rask reacts as time expires in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals against the Carolina Hurricanes in Raleigh, N.C., on May 16. Boston swept the best-of-seven series 4-0.

With 10 days between games, Boston decides to scrimmage

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

BOSTON — The Boston Bruins think they've found a way to stay sharp for the Stanley Cup Final while waiting a total of 10 days between games.

The Eastern Conference champions will hold a public intrasquad scrimmage on Thursday night, and coach Bruce Cassidy said he'll try to maintain a regular game-day schedule so that the players will get back in the routine before the opener of the championship series on Monday.

"We've got some ideas we banded around. We came up with this one," Cassidy said on Tuesday, the Bruins' fifth day off since sweeping the Carolina Hurricanes in the East finals. "We've had good practices, but this will be a little bit different."

The Bruins needed seven games to dispatch the Toronto Maple Leafs in the opening round, then had one day off before starting the second round against Columbus. They finished off the Blue Jackets in six games, and had two days to rest before Game 1 against the Hurricanes.

But that series ended Thursday, and the Bruins didn't even find out their opponent for the final until Tuesday night, when the St. Louis Blues eliminated the San Jose Sharks in six games.

Cassidy said last week he would reach out to other teams to get

pointers on how to handle long layoffs. Among them: The New England Patriots, who routinely have a first-round bye, in addition to a two-week break before the Super Bowl.

The Bruins coach said on Tuesday that he touched base with all of the teams in town, as well as some of the Boston players from the 2011 and '13 teams that went to the Final and other NHL coaches who have had long breaks. But he declined to share their advice.

"We'll take what we thought was relevant to us and go from there," Cassidy said, acknowledging that a seven-game series is different than preparing for a Super Bowl. "In the first game, we want to be good. We want to be sharp. We want to be on time. We want to win. But we have a bit more luxury than say a one-and-done."

The scrimmage will be two, 25-minute periods, with two officials on the ice. But some rules will be ignored in the interest of situational drills and keeping everyone healthy.

Cassidy said he may create a four-on-four situation as well as a six-on-five for a potential end-of-game, pulled-goalie scenario. The checking line will face off against the top line, and players might switch teams to get the matchups Cassidy wants to work on.

Individual players, including goalie Tuukka Rask, will decide how much they want to play.

Scoreboard

Conference finals

(Best-of-seven)
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Boston 4, Carolina 0
Boston 5, Carolina 2
Boston 2, Carolina 1
Boston 4, Carolina 0

WESTERN CONFERENCE
St. Louis 4, San Jose 2
San Jose 6, St. Louis 3
St. Louis 4, San Jose 2
San Jose 5, St. Louis 4 OT
St. Louis 2, San Jose 1
St. Louis 5, San Jose 0
Tuesdays: St. Louis 5, San Jose 1

Stanley Cup Final

(Best-of-seven; v-l necessary)
Boston vs. St. Louis
Monday, at Boston
AFN-Sports2, 2 a.m. Tuesday CET; 9 a.m. Tuesday JKT
Wednesday, May 29: at Boston
AFN-Sports2, 2 a.m. Thursday CET; 9 a.m. Thursday JKT
Saturday, June 1: at St. Louis
AFN-Sports2, 2 a.m. Sunday CET; 9 a.m. Sunday JKT
Monday, June 3: at St. Louis
AFN-Sports2, 2 a.m. Tuesday CET; 9 a.m. Tuesday JKT
x-Thursday, June 6: at Boston
AFN-Sports2, 2 a.m. Friday CET; 9 a.m. Friday JKT
x-Sunday, June 9: at St. Louis
x-Wednesday, June 12: at Boston

Tuesday

Blues 5, Sharks 1

San Jose	2	1	0-1
St. Louis	5	0	1-0
First Period—1. St. Louis, Perron 6 (Blash, O'Reilly, Parayko), 15:16 (pp).			
Second Period—3. San Jose, Gambrell 1 (Jones, Donskol), 6:00, 8, St. Louis, Schenn 2 (Thomas, Pietrangolo), 12:47 (pp).			
Third Period—5. St. Louis, Bozak 5 (Perron, O'Reilly), 13:05, 6, St. Louis, Barbashev 2 (Sundqvist), 17:45.			
Shots on Goal— San Jose 9-10-26. St. Louis 7-9-19.			
Power-play opportunities— San Jose 0 of 1; St. Louis 2.			
Goalies— San Jose, Jones 10-9 (18 shots-14 saves). St. Louis, Binnington 12-26-25.			
A—18,684 (19,150). T—2-25.			

Scoring lines

PLAYOFFS Through Tuesday	G	A	Pts
Logan Couture, SJ	20	14	20
Brad Marchand, BOS	17	7	11
Jaden Schwartz, STL	19	12	4
Brent Burns, SJ	20	5	11
Erik Karlsson, BOS	19	14	16
Tomas Hertl, SJ	19	10	5
David Pastrnak, BOS	17	7	8
Timothy Meier, SJ	20	5	10
Mikko Rantanen, COL	12	6	8
David Krejci, BOS	17	10	14
Ryan O'Reilly, STL	9	3	11

5 tied with 13 pts.

Wait: Blues won three straight to earn 1970 Cup Final rematch

FROM BACK PAGE

O'Reilly had three assists and Binnington stopped 25 shots.

"We always believed we could do this," said Tarasenko, who had a point in every game of the series. "But it's still an unbelievable feeling."

St. Louis won three consecutive games to advance to the franchise's first Cup Final since 1970. That series also pitted the Blues against the Bruins.

Game 1 is Monday night in Boston. Laura Branigan's "Gloria" blared over the speakers at the Blues' home arena after the latest victory on an improbable run from last in the NHL on Jan. 3 to one of the last two teams standing. The turnaround came after Craig Berube replaced Mike Yeo as coach in November and Binnington took over as the starting goaltender in January.

"We always had the talent," said Doug Armstrong, the general manager and president of hockey operations for the Blues. "But we were finding ways to lose games instead of winning them. They turned it around and just haven't stopping going."

Berube gave his team credit for working its way through a coaching change and several months of disappointing play.

"We were trying to get on the right track," Berube said. "Once we got going in Janu-



TOM GANNAM/AP

Blues goaltender Jordan Binnington made 25 saves against the San Jose Sharks during Game 6 of the Western Conference finals Tuesday in St. Louis. Binnington picked up his franchise-record 12th victory of the playoffs.

ary and February, I knew we had a good hockey team. Once you get into the playoffs anything can happen — and it did."

Blues defenseman Colton Parayko said it was a matter of confidence.

"We all bought in and eventually we fig-

ured out just how good we can be," he said. "It's a tight-knit group. But that adversity, it made us work harder for each other."

San Jose played without injured forwards Joe Pavelski and Tomas Hertl and defenseman Erik Karlsson. Injury attrition played a role for the Sharks, who played seven games in each of the first two rounds.

Dylan Gambrell scored his first career goal for San Jose, which lost for the first time in five elimination games this postseason. Martin Jones made 14 stops.

St. Louis grabbed control with a fast start.

Perron tipped in Sammy Blais' shot just 92 seconds into the game. Tarasenko made it 2-0 with a well-placed wrist shot at 16:16.

Tarasenko got his eighth goal of the postseason just seven seconds after San Jose forward Barclay Goodrow was sent off for tripping.

Gambrell converted a breakthrough along the right wing 6:40 into the second period. Jonas Donskol set up the play with a long stretch pass.

Gambrell's goal came just seconds after Jones stopped Pat Maroon from close range. It also stopped the Sharks' scoring drought at 90 minutes, 32 seconds.

Binnington improved to 12-7 with his second straight strong effort.

AUTO RACING/NBA PLAYOFFS



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Alexander Rossi lowers himself into his car during practice for the Indianapolis 500 on May 15 in Indianapolis.

Focus shifts to stacked Indy field

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The soap opera surrounding McLaren's failed bid to qualify Fernando Alonso for the Indianapolis 500 is over. The spotlight is there for the taking.

The McLaren debacle dominated the first week at Indianapolis Motor Speedway and dwarfed every other team and driver trying to make Sunday's race — including plenty of contenders ready to star in "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing."

Team Penske, Ed Carpenter Racing and engine-maker Chevrolet have shown the most consistency, while Honda and its flagship Andretti Autosport and Chip Ganassi Racing teams have work to do before the 500. Penske is on the pole for an 18th time with Simon Pagenaud and Chevrolet earned the top four starting spots in qualifying as the ECR trio of team owner Ed Carpenter, Spencer Pigot and Ed Jones took spoils two through four.

Only 1,840 seconds separated Pagenaud from Kyle Kaiser, the final qualifier, to set the closest field in Indy 500 history.

"I think all the cars are so close these days," Pagenaud said. "[You] can see that all the teams are raising the game, all the drivers are raising their game. It's honestly tremendous to be in this era of the sport because you get better and better every weekend and it never stops."

The fight to make the race was dramatic up and down pit lane. The Ganassi cars, with five-time series champion Scott Dixon and rookie Felix Rosenqvist, have been nothing special so far and Rosenqvist needed a total rebuild of his confidence following a crash three days before qualifying.

Rosenqvist was coached by three-time Indianapolis 500 winner Dario Franchitti, who shadowed the Swedish driver and got him back up to speed and into the race.

"We all tried to keep him calm," Franchitti said. "He had that look on the third [qualifying] run of, 'I

really don't want to do this.'"

Rosenqvist qualified the car 29th, narrowly avoiding Sunday's stressful "Last Row Shootout" that eliminated Alonso. Of all the drivers who crashed during last week's practice and went to backups, Rosenqvist was the only one to make it into the race on the first day of qualifying.

Sage Karam had similar struggles even as he attempted to qualify for his sixth Indy 500. The American didn't like his car and was clearly spooked; teammate JR Hildebrand had to shake the car down for Karam and assure him it had no gremlins.

Karam rebounded Sunday and was the fastest qualifier among the six vying for the final three spots in the race. He edged James Hinchcliffe, who didn't make the race last year and crashed in Saturday qualifying to put him in a desperate hole on Sunday, while Kaiser of Juncos Racing snagged the final spot in the field and sent Alonso and McLaren home.

"The pressure, yeah, I mean, it's insane," Karam said. "I never want to go through this again."

Kaiser crashed Friday, a day before qualifying, and team owner Ricardo Juncos had every employee work through the night to prepare a car. The team lost both its primary sponsors right before opening day, practiced all week in a plain white car, and Kaiser turned four flawless laps to earn his second Indy 500 start.

The drivers aren't back on the track until Friday's "Carb Day" and it will be a final chance for Andretti Autosport to see what they've got for the race. The team placed only one driver, Alexander Rossi, in the Fast Nine qualifying group and it has been a very quiet week for Marco Andretti, former winner Ryan Hunter-Reay and Zach Vech. The fifth driver, Conor Daly, is in the best car he's ever had at Andretti and posted the fastest lap of the day Friday.

He will start 11th, one spot behind Marco Andretti. Hunter-Reay qualified a disappointing 22nd.

By IAN HARRISON
Associated Press

TORONTO — With a weary Kawhi Leonard fighting through fatigue, the Toronto Raptors found enough energy to pull away from the Milwaukee Bucks.

Kyle Lowry led the way. Lowry scored 25 points, Leonard had 19 and the Raptors beat the Milwaukee Bucks 120-102 on Tuesday night to even the Eastern Conference finals at two games apiece.

"This was one of the nights that we knew Kawhi was a little bit limited and we had to come out and be aggressive for him," Lowry said.

Leonard played 52 minutes in a double-overtime win in Game 3 on Sunday despite dealing with leg soreness. He limped away from the basket following a third-quarter dunk in Game 4, but still toughed it out for 34 minutes.

"I feel good," Leonard insisted. "I'm going to keep going and keep fighting. We have a chance to make history."

Raptors coach Nick Nurse said he's not worried about Leonard's health.

"He's certainly tired, like a lot of guys in this series are," Nurse said. "He looks OK to me. There was one time I was trying to give him an extended rest and he didn't really want it so he must be OK."

Serge Ibaka had 17 points and 13 rebounds for the Raptors, who improved to 7-2 at home this postseason. Reserve Norm Powell scored 18 points, and Marc Gasol had 17 points and a team-high seven assists.

"The first two games, they really brought the intensity to us," Powell said. "They really came out and were more physical, more active. We wanted to change that narrative completely."

The home team has won all four games in the series so far. Game 5 is Thursday night in Milwaukee.



Raptors guard Kyle Lowry drives for the basket in front of Bucks guard Pat Connaughton during the second half of Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals Tuesday in Toronto. The Raptors won 120-102.

Raptors even East finals

NBA scoreboard

Conference finals
(Best-of-seven; 2-1 Milwaukee)
Eastern Conference
Milwaukee 2, Toronto 2
Milwaukee 108, Toronto 100
Milwaukee 125, Toronto 103
Toronto 118, Milwaukee 112, 2OT
Tuesday: Toronto 120, Milwaukee 102
Thursday: at Milwaukee
APF-Sports, 2:30 a.m. Friday CET; 9:30 a.m. Friday JKT
Western Conference
APF-Sports, 2:30 a.m. Tuesday CET; 9:30 a.m. Sunday JKT
Monday: at Milwaukee
APF-Sports, 1 a.m. Tuesday CET; 8 a.m. Tuesday JKT
Western Conference
Golden State 4, Portland 0
Golden State 115, Portland 94
Golden State 114, Portland 111
Abden State 110, Portland 99
Golden State 119, Portland 117, OT

Tuesday

Raptors 120, Bucks 102

MILWAUKEE — Mirocic 4-10 1-2 11, Antetokounmpo 9-17 6-25, Lopez 3-5 0-0, Bledsoe 2-7 1-2 5, Middleton 11-15 4-5 30, Ilyasova 3-5 1-2 7, Wilson 0-0 0-0 0, Hill 1-2 2-5, Frazier 0-1 2-2, Brogdon 2-11 0-1 4, Cunningham 1-4 0-0 3, Brown 1-2 0-0 2, Snell 0-1 0-0 0, Totals 37-80 17-26 102
TORONTO — Leonard 6-13 6-8 19, Siakam 3-6 1-1 7, M.Gasol 6-11 2-17, Lowry 6-11 10-12 25, Green 2-5 0-4, Powell 6-18 2-3 18, Miller 0-0 0-0 0, Boucher 0-0 0-0 0, Morant 0-0 0-0 0, Ibaka 7-12 3-17, Lin 0-1 0-0 0, VanVleet 5-6 0-6 13, Meeks 0-2 0-0 0, Totals 41-87 24-27 120

Three-Point Goals—Milwaukee 11-35 (Middleton 4-7, Lopez 2-3, Mirocic 2-8, Hill 1-2, Antetokounmpo 1-3, Cunningham 1-3, Frazier 0-1, Brown 0-1, Ilyasova 0-2, Bledsoe 0-2, Brogdon 0-3, Toronto 14-41 (Powell 4-15, VanVleet 3-5, M.Gasol 3-6, Lowry 3-7, Leonard 1-3, Meeks 0-1, Boucher 0-1, Siakam 0-2, Green 0-2, Ibaka 0-3). **Rebounds**—Milwaukee 40 (Antetokounmpo 10), Toronto 44 (Ibaka 13). **Assists**—Milwaukee 39 (Middleton 7), Toronto 32 (M.Gasol 7). **Total Fouls**—Milwaukee 22, Toronto 23. **Technical Fouls**—Milwaukee coach Bucks (Defensive second second), Toronto coach Raptors (Defensive third second). **A-20,237 (138,000).**

"We need to take this challenge of playing in a hostile environment," Nurse said. "We're going into a tough, loud place to play. Let's see if those guys can bring that same pop and focus and determination on the road."

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 25 points and 10 rebounds for the top-seeded Bucks. Khris Middle-

ton scored 30 points, but no one else had more than 11.

Milwaukee lost its second straight following a six-game winning streak. It dropped consecutive games just once during the regular season, at Utah on March 2 and at Phoenix on March 4.

"This is probably the first night defensively where I don't feel like we were close to where you need to be," coach Mike Budenholzer said. "We got punched. They played really well."

Toronto's Fred VanVleet, who missed 16 of 20 shot attempts through the first three games of the series, went 5-for-6 from the field in Game 4. He made each of his three three-point tries and finished with 13 points.

"He needed one of those games," Lowry said. "He played well and made some great plays tonight."

Ahead 94-81 to start the fourth, the Raptors extended their lead with a 10-3 spurt, including seven points from VanVleet. Powell's fast-break layup with 8:35 left put Toronto up 104-84.

"We've got to guard better," Middleton said. "Everybody on their team, I feel like they got pretty much whatever they wanted. Everything was easy."

Antetokounmpo shot 5-for-8 in the opening frame, matching the number of made baskets he had during Game 3. However, the Bucks star went 4-for-9 the rest of the way.

Leonard and Pascal Siakam, who both played more than 50 minutes Sunday, looked sluggish in the opening half. Leonard missed the only shot he took in the second, while Siakam played fewer than three minutes in the second after picking up his third foul. Siakam had two points at halftime.

Leonard came up limping after dunking against Antetokounmpo early in the third, but remained in the game.

FRANK GUNN, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

SPORTS



Raptors pull even

Toronto routs Milwaukee, ties series 2-2 » **NBA playoffs, Page 31**

The Blues celebrate Tuesday after beating the San Jose Sharks 5-1 in Game 6 of their Western Conference finals series in St. Louis.

Tom Gansum/AP

NHL PLAYOFFS



JEFF ROBERSON/AP

Sharks center Logan Couture looks up at the scoreboard after the Blues scored a goal during the third period. The Blues won the best-of-seven series 4-2.

Wait is over

Blues back in Stanley Cup Final for first time in almost 50 years

BY STEVE OVERBEY

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — The St. Louis Blues are marching into the Stanley Cup Final for the first time in decades.

Pretty sweet moment for Vladimir Tarasenko and Co.

David Perron had a goal and an assist, Jordan Binnington picked up his fran-

chise-record 12th playoff win and the Blues eliminated the San Jose Sharks with a 5-1 win in Game 6 of the Western Conference final Tuesday night.

Tarasenko, Brayden Schenn and Tyler Bozak also scored for St. Louis, which will face the Boston Bruins for the championship. Ivan Barbashev got an empty-netter with 2:15 left, Ryan

SEE WAIT ON PAGE 30

Inside: Facing 10-day layoff since last series, Bruins will scrimmage in an effort to stay sharp for Final, Page 30

Verlander strikes out 12, flirts with no-no » **MLB, Page 29**



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